

Pragmatic Translation Strategies from the Perspective of Culture Power

Xianjin Li, Jiaqi Chen

School of Languages and Literature, University of South China, Hengyang 421001, China

Abstract

Pragmatic translation is characterized by cross-linguistic, cross-cultural communication and dissemination. Based on the principles of culture exporting and transmission, and in the light of the style of pragmatic translation and the target audience, appropriate adjustments should be made to translation strategies, with first priority given to the translation of culture, function and information.

Keywords

Pragmatic Translation; Functional Translation Theory; Relevance Theory; Cultural Power.

1. Strategy of Cultural Power

As far as its connotations are concerned, cultural power includes the radiant power of public culture, the competitiveness of cultural industry, the innovation power of advanced culture, the influential power of cultural branding, the inheritance power of regional culture, the expansionary power of cultural market and the creativity of cultural talents. Cultural confidence and attractiveness, fundamentally speaking, comes from the advanced nature of culture and always leads the trend of the times and represents the future direction of human civilization.

The strategy of cultural power refers to the development of culture based on the report of the 18th National Congress of the CPC, a series of new policies and regulations on “strengthening the soft power of culture and promoting China’s rapid development” have been put forward with the construction of a strong cultural country as the breakthrough point and focus, so as to further strengthen the soft power of national culture and international influence of Chinese culture, emancipate the cultural productive forces and inherit the spiritual life of China.

2. Pragmatic Translation and its Features

According to Fang Mengzhi, pragmatic translation includes translation of science and technology, with the exception of literary and theoretical texts. In Wusong’s view, pragmatic translation includes translation of science and technology, economy and trade, law, media, tourism, advertising, etc. to distinguish them from translation of literature, politics, diplomacy and social sciences. Jia Wenbo holds that pragmatic translation is a kind of practical translation aimed at transmitting information and pays attention to the effect of transmitting information, the scope of which covers almost all fields of contemporary political, economic, social and cultural life, which is quite different from literary translation with emphasis on aesthetic appreciation of art and literature. Regardless of different opinions, there is a consensus on one point: pragmatic translation is relative to literary translation and its primary purpose is to convey information.

3. Pragmatic Translation Strategies from the Perspective of Cultural Power

3.1. Culture-oriented

Language, as an important part of culture, is bound to be influenced by culture. On the one hand, we should convey those important cultural messages as much as possible, introduce China to the world objectively and realistically, and make foreigners know Chinese civilization, create favorable international environment for China's political, economic and cultural development; on the other hand, we should not be restricted to literal correspondence, but appropriately adjust the structure and information of the version without affecting the meaning of the original, making it easier for target language readers to understand Chinese culture. In actual translation, the methods of addition, deletion, analogy and rewriting can be used. For example:

Original: 品茶的环境要清雅明净，每壶人数不宜过多。明代张源《茶录》说：“独啜曰幽，二客曰胜，三四曰趣，五六曰泛，七八曰施。”品茶者的心境要平和，讲究“人与人之和美，人与自然之和谐，人与社会之和静。”

Version: They think a clean and elegant place is essential for tea drinking, and the fewer participants, the better. The drinkers should have a peaceful frame of mind and in perfect harmony with other people, nature and society.

Analysis: The original is a brilliant description of Chinese tea-drinking culture, but if translated word for word and sentence for sentence, the version is bound to be cumbersome and wordy. The author uses “the fewer participants, the better” to convey the main idea so that readers can appreciate the beauty of the symmetry of the original text. Likewise, the last sentence of the original has been abbreviated to “in perfect harmony with other people, nature and society”.

3.2. Function-oriented

Linguists think that there are three fundamental functions for a text: expressive, informative and vocative. Hence, analysis of the functions of the source language is a prerequisite for accurate translation of the text into the target language. According to the theory of Translation Action, in translation, focus should be laid on providing readers with a functional communicative text, which means translators should not simply copy the various features of the source text, but achieve one or more communicative functions that the target text expects in the cultural environment so as to achieve functional appropriateness and equivalence. Therefore, information in the source text should be sorted out and filtered, and shared knowledge should be taken as the basis of translation to realize the transformation of basic information functions. For example:

Original: 镜泊湖的四季可谓春有花，夏有荫，秋有果，冬有雪。春季，群山泛绿，山花烂漫，湖水清澈，遍野芬芳；夏日，云水飘渺，沙平岸阔，风和气爽，绿荫如盖；金秋，枫红松翠，五光山色，帆行湖面，鱼跃水中；寒冬，银冰锁湖，雾凇挂枝，林海雪原，红妆素裹。

Version: Tourists can enjoy views of Jingpo Lake in all four seasons. It is a scenic spot with northern characteristics. When spring comes, the mountain becomes dark green, flowers bloom everywhere and the lake water is limpid. In summer, the weather is warm and sunny, the sandy beaches are flat and wide, and the greenery shades holiday makers from the sun. In autumn, the mountains are covered with red autumn leaves and flowers. Fish abound in the lake and boating is a favorite pastime. In winter, the lake water freezes, and the trees are covered with rime. The immense forest becomes a vast expanse of whiteness.

Analysis: Many flowery rhetoric words are used in the original to describe Jingpo Lake to express its natural beauty, with the expressive function exceeding the informative function. If the version is packed with adjectives as the original, it will only backfire on readers. Because, from the perspective of aesthetic function, pragmatic translation pays more attention to

objective truth rather than artistic creation. Given the taste of the target language readers, the version is not rigidly bound by the original, as can be seen from the translation of the first sentence. The second sentence highlights the geographical features of the landscape, indicating that the following four seasons will bring the ever-changing landscape of Jingpo Lake.

3.3. Information-oriented

Generally speaking, information is divided into three levels. The first level is known or expected information, which is often boring with little information value; the second one is some unknown or unexpected information with a normal amount of information and generally does not create too many barriers to understanding and is moderately challenging and novel; the third one is too much unexplained unknown information.

Pragmatic translation is a practical translation which aims at the effect and efficiency of transmitting information. The information value is different, and its evaluation index depends on the relevance of the information to the topic. To maximize the functional information of the text, translators should make full use of the cognitive context to filter and integrate information, and deduce the implied meaning behind the explicit information, choose optimal relevance based on the cognitive ability and expectation of the target text readers so as to effectively convey the original intention and relevant information. For example:

Original: 青城山是中国的历史名山和国家重点风景名胜区。其地质地貌独特，植被茂密，气候适宜，层峦叠嶂，曲径逶迤，古观藏趣。青城山悠久的历史对中国道教的创建和发展起到了巨大的奠基和推动作用，使其成为中国道教的发源地，天师道的祖山、祖庭。

Version: Endowed with special geological landform and mild climate, Qingcheng Mountain enjoys exuberant vegetation and forests through which the paths wind as well as disperse in ranges of mountains. With its long history and rich culture, Qingcheng Mountain is known as the cradle of Chinese Taoism

Analysis: The major purpose of tourism text is publicity, so information which can be attractive and persuasive to tourists is most helpful to the construction of the best context effect of the translation. Through analysis, the two information clusters that determine the best relevant information points of the text are: the beautiful scenery and the humanistic atmosphere of Mount Qingcheng. So the first sentence of the version focuses on the natural scenery, and words describing the glories and honors of Mount Qingcheng are of little use and relevance in context construction and are intentionally omitted, because target readers are more concerned about concrete specific information that can persuade them to visit. The same is true of the second information cluster about the important role in the foundation and development of Taoism in China and ancestral mountain and temple of Celestial Master Taoism, the reason for this is that some concepts are very strange to foreign tourists, and due to the limited space of tourism publicity, too excessive explanation is impractical and irrelevant to the text. In addition, the two key messages of the original "vegetation" and "history" are placed in the main sentence of the version as the most important messages to attract readers.

4. Conclusion

The characteristics of pragmatic translation determine that it is not intended for displaying cultural splendor of the target language, but rather narrowing down the differences between the source language and the target language and striving to reduce communicative barriers to information exchange. On the basis of the principles of culture exporting and dissemination, and in view of the nature of pragmatic translation: cross-linguistic, cross-cultural, communicative and diffusive, we should take full account of the cultural background and knowledge structure of the target readers, and focus on the translation of culture, function and

information to achieve the dissemination of Chinese culture, enhance the soft power of Chinese culture and international influence and ensure successful culture exporting of China.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by grants from Hunan Provincial Foundation for Philosophy and Social Sciences. "A Study on the Construction of the New Normal of Applied Translation Theory in the Context of the Cultural Power Strategy" (No.16WLH34).

References

- [1] Nida, Eugene A. *Language and Culture: Contexts in Translating* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [2] Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [3] Hatim, Basil. *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [4] Hickey, Leo. *The Pragmatics of Translation*[M]. Shanghai; Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [5] Scollon, R&Scollon, W.S. *Intercultural Communication: A discourse Approach*[M]. Beijing: Beijing Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. 2000.
- [6] Ungerer, F. &Schmid, H. J. *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*[M]. Beijing: Beijing Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2001.
- [7] Guerberof Arenas, A. J. Moorkens, *Machine Translation and post-editing training as a part of a master's programme* [J]. *The Journal of Specialized Translation*, 2019(31):217-238.
- [8] Dam, H.V. &K.K. Zethsen, "I think it is a wonderful job" on the solidity of the translation profession[J]. *The Journal of Specialized Translation*, 2016(25):174-187.