



On the English Translation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

— Taking Jiangxi Nuo culture as an example

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Abstract: The English translation of intangible cultural heritage is one of the important ways to spread Chinese traditional culture to the world. To better convey the cultural elements, translation should strive to accommodate to the target language readers' expectation horizon and reading habits in transforming discourse structure, while for the distinctive cultural traits and elements, the translator should strive to preserve their uniqueness by the use of alienation translation strategy.

Keywords: English translation of intangible culture; Translation strategies; Alienation

1. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage is an important carrier for the continuous development of Chinese civilization, and is the main form of the practice to inherit excellent traditional Chinese culture. With the steady growth of China's comprehensive national strength and the significant enhancement of China's international status, inheriting and protecting China's fine traditional culture and art, and maintaining China's traditional context and cultural genes have been endowed with new historical mission and strategic significance. Intangible cultural heritage translation is not only conducive to the improvement of China's cultural soft power, but also conducive to the promotion of the exchange among various cultures and civilizations, or "multi-language coexistence, diverse complementarity and harmonious co-development"^[1] In essence, intangible cultural heritage translation is an external publicity translation, whose purpose is to spread heterogeneous cultures and promote the diversified development of cultures. In the process of translating intangible cultural heritage, it is necessary to preserve the elements that best represent the characteristics of Chinese culture and highlight Chinese characteristics on the premise of taking into account the cognition and reading habits of foreign readers.

2. Translation strategies for intangible cultural heritage

Intangible cultural translation strategies, in general, should give priority to distinctive cultural elements, and flexible use of transliteration filling filling, free translation, transliteration and free translation, literal translation methods are often employed. In the national intangible cultural translation, the translator should seek common ground in transforming discourse structures and meet the expectation horizon of the target language readers, so as to hold their curiosity and attract them to the source language text.

2.1 Seeking similarity in discourse arrangement

Due to the differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking, Chinese and English are quite different in discourse structure and writing. In the process of translation, the translator should not stick to the text structure and form of the original text, but instead flexibly use translation methods such as compilation to improve the reading interest and experience of the target language readers.

Therefore, in translation, it is necessary to reintegrate the text and adjust the structure of the original text so that the translated text conform to the text model of the target language and the reading thinking habit of the target language readers to stimulate their interest in reading. As for the non-cultural core information, it can be briefly mentioned. For example, it can be omitted in the translation of article, which better highlights the core information of the text and strengthens the unique charm of the alien culture.

2.2 Retaining cultural elements

Intangible translation involves a lot of cultural information processing, in promoting the development of exotic cultures, the translator should try to retain the heterogeneity of Chinese culture, instead of catering to the target language culture. As a result, flexible use of transliteration, literal translation, free translation are employed to keep cultural features, which not only improve the

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readability of the target language text, but help foreign audiences understand, accept, even spread the intangible cultural heritage in our country, in order to realize "development of human cultural diversity by the United Nations"^[2].

Transliteration and annotation

Transliteration can well retain the exotic characteristics of the source language, while the interpretation in the text takes care of the readers' reading experience and feelings. Transliteration of source language words with additional information about cultural defaults in the notes is a good way to convey cultural elements.

The original: Qinuo, Yannuo, Sounuo, Yuannuo

Translation : starting Nuo, performing Nuo, searching for Nuo and the unbroken sweep of Nuo "

Improvement: Qi Nuo(the opening ceremony); Tiao Nuo (Nuo opera to show piety and to pray for good luck in the next year), Sou Nuo(going from door to door to dispel evil spirits), and Yuan Nuo(the closing ceremony).

The original uses literal translation for the four key procedures. Although faithful to the original text, it's not conducive to the understanding and reception of the readers of the target languages, and is likely to cause cultural misunderstanding. In the author's opinion, these four words are related to each other and can be used in the form of transliteration and annotations, which can not only preserve the stylistic characteristics of Nuo culture ceremony and convey the connotation of Nuo culture ceremony, but also not harm the reading experience of foreign language readers and their acceptance of the translation.

(2) Transliteration plus literal translation

Exorcism is the basic form of exorcism. The time generally begins on the first day of the first lunar month and ends a few days after the Lantern Festival.

Nuo ritual, or exorcising, is characteristic of Nuo culture, running from the 1st day of the 1st lunar month till the end of Lantern Festival(the 1st day of the 1st lunar month).

No matter in the Analects of Confucius, Records of Rites, Or in Ci Yuan and Ci Hai, the annotation of Nuo is regarded as a ceremony to exorcise the epidemic ghosts, but the explanation of nuo itself is unclear. The literal translation of this word, whose meaning is questionable, into "Nuo" without any explanation is not conducive to the foreign readers' understanding of the social function and significance of Nuo ceremony. Therefore, the interpretation of exorcising ritual with free translation of "exorcising ritual" is conducive to the readers' understanding and acceptance of exorcising cultural factors.

(3) Free translation

Qiao Zeng-rui, a famous translator, defines free translation in Translation Theory as "Using the same or similar expression in the target language to replace the mutual relationship between content and form in the original text that cannot be retained due to the difference between the two languages and strive to lose the original appearance, but from the different range of context, still lose the content of the original and the style of the original "^[3].

"Shuang Bo Lang" is a fixed Nuo drama performed every year in Shiyou village, Nanfeng city, featuring two deeply attached brothers. If translated literally into Two Brothers, it cannot highlight the connotation of the title, so we might as well use free translation "brotherhood" to convey exorcising opera theme, making it concise and well reflecting the theme, and to reproduce the essence of the traditional Nuo culture---the pursuit of harmony, peace and equality.

3 Conclusion

To sum up, the success of translation in China's intangible cultural heritage needs both accommodation and preservation. On the discourse structure, translation should accommodate to the target language culture, improve the target language readers' reading interest and reading experience and meet their expectation horizon. And on the translation of culture characteristic factor, requirements vary. The translator should strive to preserve the uniqueness of exotic culture elements, stimulate the target language readers' curiosity, and speed up the intangible culture of "localization" process in foreign countries. This is inseparable from the close cooperation and extensive exchanges between relevant Chinese communication agencies and foreign translation professionals. At present, some Chinese publishing houses and media are successfully going out to achieve the localization of intangible cultural heritage in foreign countries, or cooperating with publishing houses in other countries and regions, with editors in the target language responsible for reviewing English-language books on China. It can be said that in the future, in the process of globalization of China's intangible cultural heritage, there will be more east-West cooperation and Chinese and Western works will appear.

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