

Original Paper

Research on Translation Strategies of Foreign-oriented Publicity

Translation from the Perspective of Intercultural

Communication

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Abstract

With the rapid development of Chinese economy, the foreign-oriented publicity translation becomes increasingly significant. The purpose of foreign-oriented publicity is to show a real China to the overseas and establish a great national image. Foreign-oriented publicity translation has become an important medium for spreading Chinese culture. Apart from following the standards of “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance”, translators of publicity literature should be guided by the criteria of “three closeness”, which caters for the reality of China’s development, foreign audience’ needs for authentic Chinese information and foreign audiences’ thinking habits. Finally, translators should have the awareness of intercultural communication and ensure the effective implementation of intercultural communication by flexible omission, addition and adaptation.

Keywords

Foreign-oriented publicity translation, Intercultural communication, Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 Definition of Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation and Intercultural Communication

Foreign-oriented publicity translation is the general term of translation practice whose basic content is to complete the tasks of the translation of foreign-oriented publicity materials. In the broad sense, foreign-oriented publicity translation covers almost all translation activities, including the ones by all walks of life and departments at all levels. In the narrow sense, foreign-oriented publicity translation includes the translation of various media reports, the announcement of government documents, the introduction of government, enterprises and public institutions, public signs, information materials and other practical styles (1990). In China, the main task of foreign-oriented publicity translation is to

translate Chinese into English or other foreign languages to spread the voice of China to the world.

Intercultural communication refers to the communication between individuals and groups, as well as between people with different languages and cultural backgrounds. It also involves the process of the migration, diffusion and change of various cultural elements in the global society, and its impact on different groups, cultures, countries.

1.2 Current Research and Accomplishments

With the development of national economy and culture, the demand for foreign-oriented publicity translation continues to increase. However, compared with its importance, the study of international publicity translation has a short history, which is still a comparatively new research area so far. In this paper, the origin, characteristics, achievements, shortcomings and prospects of foreign publicity translation are reviewed.

The first use of the term was in Li's (2021) article in *Shanghai Science and Technology Translation* in 2021. Li and Zhang summarized and analyzed various English translations of "foreign-oriented Publicity Translation" by analyzing the broad and narrow meanings of "foreign-oriented Publicity" and combining the relevant theories of communication science, and concluded that the best translation method of this term should be "International Publicity Translation". (2019) Some scholars have pointed out that: "foreign-oriented publicity translation is a special form of translation. It refers to the communication activities aimed at letting the world know more about China under the background of globalization, taking Chinese as the information source, English and other foreign languages as the information carrier, various media as the channel and foreign people as the target. On the premise of following the universal principle of translation, it can be understood in a broad and narrow sense" (Zhang, 2010). Later, in 2022 and 2015, Huang wrote in *Chinese translation* for two consecutive years, putting forward the principle of "three approaches to foreign-oriented publicity" (2022), calling on translation circles and academia to pay attention to the translation quality of foreign-oriented publicity (2015).

In addition, Xu (2019) commented on the four aspects of "terminology", "translation name", "localization" and "nature" of foreign publicity translation in view of difficulties in foreign publicity translation. It lays a foundation for the systematic and professional development of translation studies. Through the interview of Zhang, Hu (2022) explained the "definition", "scope", "characteristics", and "the future development" of the foreign-oriented publicity translation. He advocated that "the translators must adhere to the combination of theory and practice. It is necessary to study deeply the thinking differences of the Chinese and foreign audience, to form effective translation theory, and make Chinese culture go global". Yang combined the theory of communication with the study of translation for foreign-oriented publicity and explained the selection of strategies and methods of translation for foreign-oriented publicity with the theoretical basis and research perspective of communication (2010). The significance of foreign-oriented publicity translation lies in promoting the spread of culture and making foreign readers understand the achievements in China on policies, economy, sciences,

technology and culture etc. The quality of foreign-oriented publicity translation is crucial to China's national image. In a word, the fundamental task of foreign-oriented publicity is to build a good international environment for China and a good international image in the world.

2. Characteristics and Principles of Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation

2.1 Characteristics of Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation

Foreign-oriented publicity translation should play an important role in the dissemination of information and the competition of public opinion in order to protect the national image and interests. In addition, foreign-oriented publicity translation is noted for its politics, accuracy and audience difference, which translators are expected to weave into the translation process at their own discretion for higher effects in global communication (Zhang, 2016).

In fact, foreign-oriented publicity translation involves not only cultural exchanges, but also political aspects. Through foreign publicity translation, a country's foreign-oriented appearance and image is established. Therefore, foreign-oriented publicity translation will inevitably receive pressure and attention from the host country and the government. Moreover, in some authoritarian countries, the foreign-oriented publicity translation is completely politicized, which is an important channel for national cultural output and foreign-oriented publicity. There is no autonomy or independence to speak of, so the translation is greatly affected by political factors. However, in some democratic countries, it is relatively free and fair. The foreign-oriented publicity translation is the epitome of a country's politics, history and culture, and helps the country to correct its shortcomings and promote the further development of the country.

As a special form of communication, the foreign-oriented publicity translation is mainly carried out by the central leadership to expound the major policies and concepts of governing the party and state, including many new concepts, new expressions and words with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, the accurate understanding and expression is very important. This is directly related to the national image and the international community's understanding of China's attitude towards many things. The first requirement for accuracy is the authenticity and reliability of the content, which is in line with the actual development of China.

The readers of foreign-oriented publicity translation are generally foreign readers. Compared with domestic readers, foreign readers are a broad audience. From the political system, there are readers in capitalist countries and in socialist countries. From the cultural context, there are readers of high-context culture (such as Japan, Korea, etc.), readers of low-context culture (such as Germany, the United States, France, etc.) and readers of middle-context culture (such as Greece, Italy, etc.). The diversity of audiences is closely related to the communication effect of foreign-oriented publicity translation. In the same foreign-oriented publicity content, different readers will have different reactions, so the dissemination effect is very different.

2.2 Principles of Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation

2.2.1 “Faithfulness, Expressiveness, and Elegance”

When translators apply the “faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance” principle to translation practice, they should have background understanding of different translation objects in different fields. The translation should ensure the accuracy of the expression and the elegance of the language, so that the translation is readable, audible and understandable (Yang, 2018).

Any translation should be faithful and accurate. As a special form of communication, translation is not only influenced by the major decisions of the central leadership and some governance concepts, but also contains a large number of new words and expressions with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, it is crucial to understand accurately the meaning of the source language. The translation is directly related to the national image and international community. The accuracy requires that content is authentic and reliable, so target readers not only understand the literal meaning of the original text, but also understand its connotation. For example, in the 18th CPC national congress reports, “人民精神文化更加丰富多彩” can be translated into “People enjoy richer intellectual pursuits and cultural entertainment.” (Net1), if “精神文化” is translated into “spiritual pursuits”, it mainly refers to activities related to religions. And in the 19th CPC national congress, “满足人民过上美好生活的新期待，必须提供丰富的精神食粮” is translated into “To meet the people’s new aspirations for a better life, we must provide them with rich intellectual nourishment.” (Net2), the “精神食粮” means cultural activities, so “intellectual” conveys precisely meaning of the original text.

2.2.2 “Three Closeness”

According to Huang (2022), the correct translation needs to follow the standard of “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance”, and also requires the translator to be familiar with the principle of “three closeness”, that is, close to reality, close to the needs of foreign audiences in China’s information development, and close to the thinking habits of foreign audiences. For translators engaged in foreign publicity translation, the most important thing is to devote themselves to the study of foreign cultures and the psychological thinking mode of foreigners. They should be good at discovering and analyzing the subtle differences and characteristics of Chinese and foreign cultures and follow the thinking habits of foreign audiences.

3. Translation Strategies of Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Communication

3.1 Main Problems Existing in Foreign-oriented Publicity Translation

Translation always serves a specific cultural strategic purpose (2019). Due to the differences between different countries and culture, there are some major problems in the aspects of ideology, history, culture and language expression in the translation of foreign-oriented publicity.

Firstly, the translation of foreign publicity will encounter some sensitive topics, including territory, sovereignty and diplomacy. It is the mission of translation to safeguard national interests and correctly

express China's political position. For example, controversial expressions such as "Mainland China" should be avoided in the translation of foreign-oriented publicity. In contrast to "Mainland China", "China's mainland" is more appropriate.

In addition, the foreign-oriented publicity translation will encounter many expressions with Chinese national cultural characteristics, which may cause cultural vacancy. Sometimes, the Chinese media like to use exaggerated metaphors. For example, phrases such as "一场没有硝烟的战争" "白衣战士" "扶贫攻坚战" were reported in the press. In the context, the foreign-oriented publicity translation will only deepen the preconceived prejudice of the international audience. Therefore, it is inappropriate to use the translation of "a smokeless battle", "white-coated soldier" and "poverty-relief battle", but to translate into "invisible efforts" "medical worker" "poverty-relief campaign" "Chinese team". Therefore, how to convey accurate meaning is an unavoidable problem in the foreign-oriented publicity translation.

Public diplomatic translation has involved three basic concepts of communication, namely publicizing, explaining and persuading. "Foreign-oriented publicity and communication is actually a national extension of state sovereignty and a necessary means to safeguard the fundamental interest of country" (2015). Wang (2022) believed that translators should put the political considerations first. Foreign-oriented publicity translation should follow the publicizing theory. For example, "抗美援朝" cannot be translated into "Korean War" according to western traditional thinking.

Explaining refers to communication and sharing information with others. As Zhao (2021) says, If you want to show the world the real China, you cannot ignore the importance of the audience. For example, China Daily defined its purpose of running a newspaper as "to let the world know about China and let China go global", and the State Council Information Office defines its function as "to introduce and explain China to the world".

Persuading refers to transmission of information through the interaction between participants to facilitate the voluntary change of opinion or behavior of an individual or group. In contrast to the explanation, persuasion is not only a response to the awareness of the audience, but also a close attention to the awareness of rhetoric. The purpose of persuasion is to effectively use symbolic resources such as language to influence the thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviors of foreign audiences. For example, the TV documentary *A Bite of China* is a very successful example in terms of material selection, production, dissemination and reception, which profoundly affects the cognition, emotion, attitude and behavior of audiences at home and abroad.

3.2 Guiding Strategies of Domestication and Foreignization

The translation terms of domestication and foreignization were proposed by Lawrence Venuti (1992), a famous American translation theorist, in his book *The Invisibility of the Translator* in 1995. He believes that the domestication strategy keeps the readers at home and brings the author to the reader, while the foreignization strategy keeps the author at home and brings the reader to the author. As two translation strategies, domestication and foreignization are both opposite and unified. Absolute domestication and

absolute foreignization do not exist.

3.2.1 Domestication

In April 1954, Premier Chou Enlai led a delegation to attend the Geneva Conference. In order to make the western world better understand China and comprehend the implication of rich Chinese traditional culture, Premier Chou specially arranged to show a beautiful and lyrical film *Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai*. This is a romantic love story that is well known in China. However, foreigners know little about this story. Premier Chou skillfully translated the title of the film into “Chinese Romeo and Juliet”, which struck an emotional chord with western audiences. After the film was released, foreign audiences who watched the film immediately praised the film as a beautiful and sad love story. For another example, the next day after the death of Mei, a Hong Kong entertainer, the headline in the English-language *Shanghai Daily* was HK’s Madonna Passes Away.

In Chinese, many words do not represent the conceptual meaning of the words reflected in the general context but contain additional meanings with special connotations of Chinese culture. For such Chinese words, domestication is a better approach. On March 14, 2021, the Chinese government’s prime minister, Wen cited the CPPCC press conference poem “Li Sao”, “亦余心之所善兮，虽九死其犹未悔”. The translator Zhang translated it into “For the ideal that I hold dear to my heart, I’d not regret a thousand times to die.” In ancient Chinese, “九” means “much”, so it is translated into “a thousand times”, which is accurate and be in conformity with the habits of English.

From the examples above we can get the information that in the translation of policy, economy and diplomacy, domestication is an advisable strategy.

3.2.2 Foreignization

In contrast to domestication, foreignization refers to source-culture-oriented translation. According to Venuti (1992), the purpose is to develop the culture of the target language and play a guiding role to highlight the differences between the language and culture of the text. And he argues that it is necessary to make target readers of different languages understand the foreign culture of different countries and make cross-cultural communication more meaningful and valuable. As a means of cultural exchange translation should also shoulder the mission of promoting cultural prosperity of the nation.

To promote the Chinese culture to the world, translators should adopt foreignization and keep the “original” flavor of the source text, especially the government documents. For example, in the 19th CPC national congress, “中华民族伟大复兴，绝不是轻轻松松、敲锣打鼓就能实现的。” is translated into “Achieving national rejuvenation will be no walk in the park; it will take more than drum beating and gong clanging to get there.” (Net 3) “敲锣打鼓” is a Chinese idiom, and an expression with Chinese cultural characteristics. The phrase “drum beating and gong clanging” is a foreignized translation, which reserves the cultural image and characteristics, and successfully conveys the spirit of the original text. Foreign-oriented publicity translation reflects the major policies of the party and the government and embodies the unique theory of the socialist road with Chinese characteristics. Thus, foreign-oriented publicity translation should conform to China’s national conditions, have distinct

Chinese characteristics and convey the cultural differences.

3.3 Specific Translation Techniques of Foreign-oriented Publicity from the Perspective of International Communication

The translation strategy determines the quality of the translation, and the quality of the translation affects the effect of cross-cultural communication. Firstly, the translator should make clear the purpose of foreign-oriented publicity translation. Secondly, the translator should deeply analyze the ideas to be conveyed in the foreign-oriented publicity text and achieve the purpose of cross-cultural communication through proper translation. Finally, translators should choose translation strategies flexibly, not only to retain the characteristics of Chinese culture, but also to be accepted by foreign readers. The author believes that the following translation strategies can achieve positive cross-cultural communication.

3.3.1 Omission

Pinkham (2010) points out in *The Translator's Guide to Chinglish* "Almost every text that has been translated into English from Chinese contains unnecessary words. Draft translations are commonly full of them." Therefore, in the translation of foreign-oriented publicity, it is necessary to omit superfluous expressions and focus on the effective transmission of information.

Example 1 每年全国人大都安排我在 3 月 8 日举行记者会。这使我有机会能够当面向在场的女记者们、向所有女同胞们致以节日的祝福，祝大家天天高兴、事事顺遂。

Translation: Every year, the NPC schedules my news conference for 8 March. This gives me an opportunity to extend festive greetings in person to all the female journalists in this room. Indeed, I want to wish all women happiness and good luck.

This is Foreign Minister Wang Yi's opening address at the 2017 National People's Congress and the Chinese People's political consultative conference. The four-character case of "天天高兴、事事顺遂" in Chinese is to strengthen the tone and foil the atmosphere. If translated into "to be happy everyday and to be successful in everything", it takes on a flavor of strong Chinglish, While the translator grasped the core meaning of the two words "happy" and "luck" and translated it into "happiness and good luck".

Example 2 一个在改革开放进程中蓬勃发展的新北京，把自己悠远深厚的文化底蕴，兼容并蓄的宽广胸怀，谦和礼貌的公德素养，奋发有为的进取精神展现给全世界，为世界奉献一届与众不同的新奥运。

Translation: Beijing, with its new prosperous look as a result of the country's reform and opening-up drive, will present the world with a unique Olympic game.

The translator deleted such modifiers as "悠远深厚""兼容并蓄""谦和礼貌""奋发有为" and replaces them with "new prosperous look". The translator extracts relevant information according to the communicative intention of the original text and the expectation of the reader. On the contrary, if these modifiers are translated word by word, they will seem to have no point and make no sense. Therefore, the translator must reduce the original text properly and make some choices in order to express the

meaning of the original text correctly.

3.3.2 Addition

This strategy is often used to translate sentences with special cultural meanings, which is conducive to revealing cultural connections or providing readers with more cultural background information.

Example 3 五年来，我们统筹推进”五位一体”总体布局、协调推进”四个全面”战略布局、”十二五”规划胜利完成，“十三五”规划顺利实施。

Translation: In the past five years, we have implemented the five-sphere integrated plan and four-pronged comprehensive strategy, fulfilled the goals of the 12th Five-Year Plan, and made smooth progress in implementing the 13th Five-Year Plan.

It should be noted that foreign readers do not know the words with Chinese characteristics such as “五位一体”“四个全面”“十二五”“十三五”. Therefore, the translator must express its specific meaning clearly. The above four phrases can be translated as such: “five-sphere integrated plan”, “four-pronged comprehensive strategy”, “the 12th Five-Year Plan” and “the 13th Five-Year Plan”. Appropriate addition and translation of such texts will help to better express China’s policy, spread Chinese culture and make China better integrated into the world.

Example 4 深圳经济特区建立 30 周年庆祝大会今天上午在深圳隆重举行。

Translation: Shenzhen, a southern city bordering Hong Kong, is marking its 30th anniversary as China’s first special economic zone, or SEZ.

The newspaper report does not give an account of Shenzhen’s geographical location. The translation should be consistent with English expressions when dealing with similar situations. “In English news reports represented by the United States, it has become an industry practice that the location of a place is always mentioned, while the identity of a person is always mentioned” (2017). In addition, there are many famous historical and cultural cities and newly developed cities are unknown to foreigners in China. Therefore, the translator should stand in the perspective of the audience, so that the reader can understand the meaning of the original text.

3.3.3 Adaptation

Adaptation is also known as rewriting or reorganization.

Example 5 朋友多了，路才会好走。

Translation: More friends, more opportunities.

If this sentence is translated into “The more friends, the smoother the road”, foreigners will most likely feel confused. So, the translator changed the word “road” to “opportunity”, which not only shows that China wants to build good relations with close friends in other countries, but also brings more opportunities for China and other countries.

Example 6 丝绸之路是连接中国与亚欧大陆的交通要道。

Translation: The Silk Road refers to a transport route, connecting ancient China with Central Asia, West Asia, Africa, and The European continent.

Translators should neither underestimate the intelligence of foreign audiences, nor overestimate their

understanding of Chinese culture, so the translator should properly understand the cross-cultural context. The reconstruction of texts to supplement cultural information is regarded as an effective means to interpret cross-cultural information with special cultural significance.

The translation of the above example complicates the information of the source text. The translator not only translated “亚欧大陆” into central Asia, west Asia, Africa and Europe, but also turned “China” into “ancient China”, making it easier to understand. The translator compiles the Chinese language to increase the information content and excavate the deep information so as to make the writing more fluent and logical.

4. Conclusion

Making Chinese culture go global is a necessary way for China to become a more prosperous country. Foreign-oriented publicity translation plays a leading role in this process. The translator should introduce a real China to the world in accordance with the characteristics of the politics, accuracy and audience difference of foreign-oriented publicity translation. Therefore, foreign publicity should follow “three closeness”, and choose between foreignization and domestication strategies flexibly. At the same time, foreign-oriented publicity translation should be combined with intercultural communication to ensure the effective implementation of intercultural communication. Translators should ensure the effective implementation of cross-cultural communication through flexible omission, addition and adaptation.

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