

Study on the Translation of Shaolin Wushu Culture Publicity from the Perspective of Eco-translatology

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Abstract: With the acceleration of cultural globalization, the importance of cross-cultural communication is becoming increasingly significant. Shaolin Wushu, as an important part of the world cultural heritage, enjoys a great reputation in the world. However, its foreign publicity translation has not received enough attention, and theoretical research lags behind practical development. From the perspective of Eco-translatology, this study analyses examples of English translation of Zhengzhou Shaolin Wushu culture from three dimensions: linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension, and explores how to better convey its connotation and value. Through analysis, this study points out that in the process of Chinese-English translation, it is necessary to consider the cultural background and linguistic habits of the target readers and adopt flexible translation methods. Meanwhile, appropriate explanations of the source language culture are provided to promote not only the readers' understanding and acceptance but also the accurate and effective dissemination of Shaolin culture.

Keywords: Shaolin Wushu Culture; Publicity Translation; Eco-Translatology; Three-Dimensional Transformation

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of cultural globalization, the importance of cross-cultural communication and dissemination has become more and more prominent. As an important part of the world cultural heritage, Shaolin Wushu enjoys a great reputation around the world. Zhengzhou Shaolin culture has been rapidly spreading to the outside world through martial arts performances, martial arts competitions, and martial arts festivals. However, compared with the current rapid development of the Shaolin Wushu cultural

industry chain, its foreign translation has not been given high priority, and the theoretical research has lagged behind the development of its practice, which has greatly hindered the process of its foreign dissemination.

Eco-translatology was proposed by Professor Hu Gengshen in 2001 which has been an emerging paradigm of translation research. After more than twenty years of development and improvement, it has become a more systematic theory of translation research, with strong guiding significance for translation practice. Under the perspective of Eco-translatology, translation is regarded as an ecological behavior, which needs to take into account the comprehensive influence of various factors such as the culture of the target language, the original text, the social background, and the purpose of translation. Under the background of ecological culture, Eco-translatology integrates the Western ecological theory and the Eastern concept of "Heaven and man are united as one" and regards translation as a ecological environment. In the process of translation, whether the translator can make adaptive choices according to the text has a greater impact on the quality of translation. Therefore, it is of significance to re-examine and guide the foreign publicity translation of Shaolin Wushu culture from the perspective of Eco-translatology, in order to promote the international dissemination of Chinese culture and facilitate Chinese-foreign cultural exchanges and co-operation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Foreign Research Status

Foreign research on martial arts culture has been explored, and books related to martial arts culture have been retrieved from Amazon.com with the keyword of "Shaolin Kungfu" in the book classification. Among them, Carradine [1] explained the connotation of Shaolin spirit and Shaolin philosophy. Lee [2] focused on the

introduction of basic Chinese boxing, and the pictures in the book were all hand-drawn by Bruce Lee, and Lorge [3] elaborated on the development history of Chinese martial arts and deepens the world's understanding of Shaolin martial arts. In short, foreign studies have favoured the study of the ontology of martial arts, but have neglected to deeply interpret the connotations of Shaolin Wushu culture.

In addition to the relevant books, the related translation principles and theories put forward by western scholars also have practical guiding significance for foreign translation. For instance, Venuti [4] put forward the translation terms of “domestication” and “foreignization”, and Vermeer [5] put forward the Skopos theory. These theories emphasize the importance of the purpose of translation, audience acceptance and cross-cultural communication. They have certain guiding significance for Shaolin Wushu cultural publicity in terms of translation skills and strategies.

However, there are some limitations in foreign studies. In particular, due to language and cultural differences, foreign scholars' understanding of Shaolin Wushu culture may be one-sided, while there is a lack of interdisciplinary research on the translation of Shaolin Wushu culture.

2.2 Domestic Research Status

Through the review of related literature, it is found that domestic researchers have studied Shaolin Wushu culture from different perspectives. Zhao [6] adopted information theory to analyze the English translations in Shaolin Wushu culture materials, and proposed that when translating the text, the focus should be on the reader's receptive ability and knowledge experience, and the translated content of the original text should be adjusted in a timely manner, so as to achieve the effective transmission of information. Sun [7] put forward the translation strategies for Shaolin culture and Shaolin canonical books, guided by the theory of intertextuality translation. Bai [8] explored the countermeasures to strengthen the mechanism of cultural translation and the construction of talents in response to the translation of martial arts culture in the new era. Wu [9] analyzed the problem of translating Shaolin culture's materials through literature method, case study method and field survey method. Li [10] took the adaptationist choice of Eco-translatology

studies as an entry point to study the principles to be followed in the foreign propaganda of Shaolin martial arts. Jiao and Zhao [11] traced the history of Shaolin Kungfu translation, formation, development and evolution and analyzed the status quo of Shaolin Kungfu translation. In recent years, the international dissemination and translation research of Shaolin martial arts have gradually attracted the attention of the academic circle. Relevant achievements have been expanded in aspects such as dissemination paths, term translation and strategic design. Wu [12] explored the international communication strategies of Southern Shaolin martial arts from the perspective of the “Belt and Road Initiative”, emphasizing the communication value and practical paths in a cross-cultural context. At the level of translation practice, Wang [13] took the consecutive interpretation of the lecture “Introduction to Shaolin Martial Arts” as an example to systematically analyze the strategic selection for the English translation of martial arts terms, providing an operational reference framework for interpretation practice. Meanwhile, Xu [14] focused on the special text of Shaolin martial arts proverbs, exploring their English translation methods and cultural transmission issues, enriching the research on micro-translation of martial arts. On this basis, Yuan [15] proposed from the perspective of top-level design that the international dissemination of Shaolin martial arts under the global strategy of Chinese culture should focus on systematic planning and path optimization, providing macro guidance for subsequent policies and practices. The above-mentioned literature has advanced the research on the international dissemination of Shaolin martial arts from different dimensions. However, the existing achievements are mostly concentrated on macro strategies or single texts, and there is still a lack of in-depth investigation into the audience acceptance effect and digital communication methods. In the future, it can be further improved by combining empirical research.

To sum up, throughout the academic world at home and abroad, the research on Shaolin Wushu culture has achieved relevant achievements. However, there are still some challenges and limitations in these studies. Most of the previous studies involve a macro perspective, and the researches on Shaolin

Wushu culture lacks relevance, professionalism and systematicity. Therefore, it is necessary to explore Shaolin Wushu culture publicity translation on the basis of Eco-translatology so as to provide effective theoretical support for the relevant translation practice.

3. Eco-Translatology

3.1 The Concept of Eco-Translatology

According to Professor Hu [16], Eco-translatology can be understood as a new paradigm of translation research based on the perspective of ecology. It is well known that Darwin's evolutionary theory is a source of Eco-translatology. In Darwin's theory of evolution, organisms can change over a long period of time. Eco-translationism systematically studies the translation ecological environment, translated texts, translators' consideration of external environmental factors in the translation process, and translators' adaptation and selection. As far as the theory of Eco-translatology is concerned, translation must adapt to the environment. Translation activities are closely related to the translation ecological environment, which includes not only the material environment but also the spiritual and cultural environment. In order to achieve good translation results, translators must meet the requirements of the translation ecological environment. In translation practice, the translator is the center, and attention should be paid to the adaptive selection and reasonable conversion among linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions.

3.2 The Connotation of Eco-Translatology

3.2.1 Translational Eco-environment

The establishment of Eco-translatology studies provides a new perspective for translation research. It is believed that translation is a complete and harmonious organic whole. Every part of the system interacts with each other and every ecological behaviour is influenced by many factors. Translation ecology is a complete system including the original text, the translated text and the translator, which extends the conventional concept of context and presents the overall state of the text and the translator. It is a world created by all the factors involved in the translation process: language, culture, society, the original author, the reader, etc. These factors play a key role in the formation of the translation

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ecology, which has been the prerequisites for and determines the translator's adaptation and choice. In recent years, the connotation of translational eco-environment has been more widely accepted. All the elements involved in the translation process, as well as all the material and spiritual things surrounding translation, are part of the translation ecology; the translator himself becomes part of another translation ecology. The translation should be analyzed from a holistic perspective.

3.2.2 Adaptation and Selection

The concepts of adaptation and selection come from Darwin's theory of evolution, which is the core concept of Eco-translatology. In the process of translation, translators should not only adapt but also choose, both of which are essential parts. There can be selection in adaptation, i.e. adaptation to selection; adaptation in selection, i.e. selective adaptation. What the translator adapts to in the translation ecology is the world presented by the original language and the translated language; what the translator chooses is the extent and method of this adaptation and the final version of the translation. Translation has been described as an alternating process of adaptation and choice on the part of the translator. The purpose of adaptation is to strive for survival, while the method of adaptation is to optimize choice.

3.2.3 Three-dimensional Transformations

Three-dimensional transformations is an important part of Eco-translatology, and translators can learn from three-dimensions when they are translating so as to achieve linguistic, cultural and communicative transformation. The best translation is the one with the highest degree of overall adaptation and selection. The degree of overall adaptation and selection is intertwined with three-dimensional translation. Three-dimensional translation is a detailed translation method used by the translator in the translation process. It reflects the translator's ability to adapt and choose. Three-dimensional transformation includes linguistic, cultural and communicative transformation. These dimensions are the guidance for practical translation.

3.3 The Feasibility of Shaolin Wushu Publicity Translation under Eco-Translatology

Eco-translatology is a multidisciplinary theory to translation research which emphasizes the

ecological balance and adaptability in the translation process, and believes that translation is a dynamic process in which multiple factors such as language, culture, society and psychology interact with each other. In Shaolin Wushu culture publicity translation, the application of Eco-translatology has certain feasibility. Ecological translation emphasizes the adaptability of the translator, i.e., the translator needs to fully understand the linguistic and cultural background of the target audience and adapt to their linguistic habits and cognitive styles so as to better convey the unique charm and value of Shaolin Wushu culture. By adapting to the language and cultural environment of the target audience, the translator can better convey the connotation and characteristics of Shaolin Wushu culture and improve the accuracy and acceptability of the translation.

In addition, Eco-translatology focuses on the ecological balance in the translation process, i.e., maintaining the integrity and accuracy of the information in the original text, while taking into account the linguistic, cultural and psychological factors of the target audience to realize a multi-dimensional balance. In Shaolin Wushu culture translation, translators need to make appropriate adjustments of the original text on the basis of retaining the core information of the original text, taking into full consideration the needs and cultural background of the target audience, in order to realize the balance of the three dimensions of language, culture and society. By maintaining the ecological balance between the original text and the target text, the translator can better convey the unique value of Shaolin Wushu culture and promote cross-cultural communication and understanding.

4. Analysis of the English Translation of Shaolin Wushu Culture Publicity from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology

4.1 Linguistic Transformation

The differences between English and Chinese in language dimension are mainly reflected in phonology, vocabulary, syntax, pragmatics and other aspects. Based on the differences between English and Chinese in the linguistic dimension, the translation of Shaolin Wushu culture from the perspective of Eco-translatology should take into account the ecological environment of the

source and target languages in the linguistic dimension. In addition, by combining the cultural characteristics of Shaolin Wushu and the linguistic habits of the target language audience, appropriate translation strategies and methods should be chosen to maintain the harmony and unity of the source language and the target language in the translation process.

From the point of syntactic structure, English is usually more rigorous, and the subject-verb-object structure is more fixed, whereas the syntax of Chinese is more flexible, and different meanings are expressed by changing the word order. Therefore, when translating from Chinese to English, it is necessary to adjust the structure of the sentence to conform to the grammatical rules of English. In the sentence “shǐ jiàn yú gōng yuán 495 nián, shào lín sì wèi yú sōng shān xī lù, jù hé nán shēng dēng fēng shì xī běi 13 gōng lǐ. ”, “wèi yú ” is translated as “located at” and “western foot of Songshan Mountain” is placed at the beginning of the sentence, as a locative at the beginning of the sentence. Secondly, in terms of vocabulary choice, the Chinese and English words do not exactly correspond to each other. For example, “shào lín sì” is usually translated as “Shaolin Temple” instead of “Monks Temple”. Similarly, “wèi yú” has no direct equivalent in English, but needs to be expressed through prepositional phrases. At the same time, the translator also needs to pay attention to the adaptability of language style to ensure that the translation result meets the target readers’ linguistic habits and aesthetic standards. Combining the above considerations, the reference translation of this sentence is “Located at the western foot of Songshan Mountain, Shaolin Temple was founded in 495A.D., 13kilometers northwest to Dengfeng City, Henan Province.”

In addition, the sentence “shào lín quán fǎ yǐ gāng měng yǒu lì、kuài sù líng lì zhù chēng。 ” can be translated by a combination of free translation and literal translation. “shào lín quán fǎ ” can be translated as “Shaolin Boxing” to better convey the meaning of the original text and to facilitate the acceptance of the Western target language readers. As for the adaptation of language styles, different readers may have different language habits and aesthetic standards, so the needs and expectations of the target readers need to be taken into account when

translating. In this sentence, figurative and vivid linguistic expressions can be used to attract readers' interest. The reference translation is "Shaolin Boxing is known for its powerful and swift movements."

Moreover, "tiān xià gōng fū chū shào lín." is a proverb widely spread in China, which means that the best kung fu in the world comes from Shaolin Temple. From the perspective of the linguistic dimension of Eco-translatology, the translation of this sentence needs to consider the following aspects. In terms of vocabulary choice, "tiān xià" in this sentence can be translated as "heaven", "the world", or "all over the world", and similarly, "gōng fū" can be translated as "martial arts" or "kung fu", while considering that this is a proverb about the Shaolin Temple, the phrase "gōng fū" can be translated as "kung fu". However, considering that this is a proverb about the Shaolin Temple, the world's best martial arts would be more appropriate. The reference translation of this sentence is "The best martial arts come from Shaolin Temple". In short, when translating, it's better to consider the cultural background of the original language and the reading habits of the target language readers. The linguistic connotation needs to be preserved in the translation, and the translation needs to take into account the choice of vocabulary, grammatical structure and other factors in order to maintain the accuracy and coherence of the original text, and at the same time to enable readers of the target language to understand and appreciate this cultural value.

4.2 Cultural Transformation

From the perspective of cultural dimension, it is necessary to pay attention to the cultural adaptation and selection in the translation process. Especially for words rich in Chinese cultural heritage, translators should focus on the cultural connotation of the text itself when translating to achieve the conversion of the cultural dimension.

In view of the fact that there are many boxing terms in Shaolin Wushu, translators need to consider the cultural differences between Chinese and Western cultures and choose appropriate expressions. For example, "shé quán" is a kind of Shaolin Wushu, which emphasizes the imitation of the movements and demeanor of snakes. The translation version of "Snake Fist" may cause misunderstanding among English audiences, because "snake" in

English is usually associated with derogatory words. Therefore, it can be translated as "Serpentine Fist" and its meaning and technique can be explained in the notes. In addition, "hóu quán" is a kind of Shaolin Wushu, which emphasizes the imitation of monkey's movements and demeanor. The translation "Monkey Fist" may cause misunderstanding among English audiences because "monkey" in English is usually associated with derogatory words. Therefore, it can be translated as "Monkey-style Fist" and its meaning and technique can be explained in the notes.

Shaolin Wushu emphasizes on actual combat, and Shaolin Palm Technique is an important part of Shaolin Wushu, with a wide variety and a complete system. "jīn gāng zhǎng" is one of the Shaolin Wushu palm techniques, emphasizing the work on the palm of the hand. When it is completed, the palm is as hard as iron, capable of breaking bricks and stones, chopping steel pillars, and entangling steel reinforcement bars. The word "jīn gāng" can be translated as "diamond; king kong; Buddha's warrior attendant". The translation of "Diamond Palm" may be confusing to English-speaking audiences because there is no equivalent cultural context or vocabulary in English. The translation in Baidu's encyclopedia is "King kong Palm", which still fails to convey the connotation of the Diamond Palm. It is suggested to use a combination of pronunciation and English to translate it as "Jin Gang Zhang (Adamant Hand)", which is more conducive to the target language readers' understanding of the connotation of Chinese martial arts culture. Similarly, "tiě shā zhǎng" is translated as "Tie Sha Zhang (Iron Sand Palm)". If it is translated as "Iron Palm", the meaning of "shā" is lost, and it does not reflect the way of practicing with the hand inserted into the iron sand, and there will be a loss of information, while the combination of pronunciation and English makes the English language closer to the original text when it comes to expressing the meaning.

Shaolin monks have a kind of hard qigong called "tiě bù shān", which means that refers to long-term exercise, their muscles and skin become hard as iron, so as to thus achieve the purpose of defending against enemy attacks. In this translation example, the translator should also fully consider the cultural differences between the source language and the target language, translate it into "iron shirt" which is in

line with English expression habits, and add annotations to explain it. If “tiě bù shān” is simply translated according to the literal meaning, it will be mistaken by foreigners for some kind of special clothing or armor, rather than thinking of the ability to be invulnerable. The English meaning is “ability to sustain the thrusts of sharp weapons on one’s bare skin”, which is easier for target language readers to understand and accept.

Through the above analysis, it can be seen that in the process of translating Shaolin boxing and palm techniques into English, the translator should give full consideration to the selection and conversion of cultural dimensions, so that the audience can better understand the connotation of Shaolin Wushu culture.

4.3 Communicative Transformation

The communicative dimension emphasizes that the translator should pay attention to the communicative intention of the original text, focus on the communicative dimension, and make it accurately conveyed in the translation process. The conversion of the linguistic and cultural dimensions is the cornerstone of Eco-translatology, while the adaptive conversion of the communicative dimension is the highest requirement for the translation. The combination of the three dimensions maintains and preserves the ecological environment of the source and target languages.

When translating, translators consider adopting appropriate translation methods to meet the target language readers’ comprehension needs, so as to achieve the purpose of communication. In particular, the terms commonly used in martial arts seldom have corresponding expressions in English, so when translating, the translation strategy of foreignization can often be used to achieve the communicative dimension of the relevant terms. “shī fu” can be translated as “Master”, while “shī xiōng” can be translated as “Senior Martial Brother”, “shī dì” can be translated as “Junior Martial Brother”. Moreover, Wuzuquan is well known all over the world. Legend has it that Wuzuquan was edited and created by “shào lín wǔ zǔ”, which can be translated as “Five Shaolin Masters”. Namely, there are five origins of quan, including Taizuquan, Luohanquan, Damoquan, Xingzhequan and Baihequan. The elaboration of Wuzuquan makes the translation version reach the purpose of communication.

A study of these examples reveals that the translator must be clear about the primary intent of the source text. The communicative goal may not be the same as the apparent meaning, so the translator must be aware of the underlying meaning. Translators must convey true meaning and communicative goals.

5. Conclusion

Under the perspective of Eco-translatology, the publicity translation of Shaolin Wushu culture needs to pay attention to cultural communication and contextual adaptation. During the translation process, the cultural background and cognitive habits of the target audience need to be fully considered, and appropriate translation strategies and methods, such as transliteration, paraphrasing, adding notes, etc., need to be adopted in order to realize the double conversion of language and culture. In addition, communication effect and cross-cultural communication are equally important, which requires attractive and infectious translations to arouse the interest of the target audience. In order to further enhance the research in this field, it is suggested that future work can be carried out in the following ways: expanding the scope of the study to analyze in depth the dissemination of Shaolin Wushu culture across the globe and audience reactions; increasing empirical studies to obtain a more comprehensive assessment of the translation quality through surveys and feedbacks; as well as promoting cross-disciplinary cooperation to deepen the understanding of the translation of the foreign publicity of Shaolin Wushu culture in connection with the theories from fields such as cross-cultural communicative science.

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