Research on Translation Strategies of Political Texts for International Publicity from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology

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Abstract: Eco-translatology provides a new perspective and methodology for the international publicity translation of political texts. This paper applies the viewpoint and methodology of eco-translatology, focuses on the three-dimensional transformation of language, culture, and communication, and discusses how translators can adapt to the eco-environment of political texts through the specific example of the keynote speech of China's president at the opening ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and select suitable translation strategies and techniques to achieve an ecological balance of the target text in multiple dimensions.

Keywords: Eco-translatology; Three-dimensional transformation; Political texts; International publicity translation

1. Political texts for international publicity translation

In today's deepening globalization, the appearance of dialogues and exchanges in the international community is on the rise. China is actively participating in the process of globalization, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has put forward new requirements for China's language service industry and raised "translating Chinese to English" to a new level. China's translation has changed from the language input market in the past to the language output market today [1], and international publicity translation has gradually become an important part of China's foreign communication and external broadcasting capabilities. According to Prof. Huang Youyi, international publicity translation refers to "translating a large amount of information about China from Chinese into foreign languages, publishing and disseminating it to the outside world through media such as books, periodicals, newspapers, radio, television, Internet, as well as international conferences" [2]. The word "international publicity" clearly explains its connotation and function, namely, "for foreign countries" and "for dissemination." At present, domestic international publicity translation includes the international publicity of enterprise materials, tourism materials, scientific and technological materials, as well as political materials [3].

Peter Newmark categorizes all texts into three main types, namely "expressive texts," "informational texts," and "evocative texts" [4]. Different subcategories of political texts belong to distinct text types, for instance, authoritative statements belong to expressive texts, while political comments and official speeches belong to evocative texts [5]. Political texts have a distinctive political nature and high authority, and the language expression is formal, accurate, and appropriate. Therefore, when translators translate political texts, they should use specific translation strategies according to the text types and exhibit a high degree of political sensitivity as well as faithfulness and accuracy to the original text. At the same time, translators should also express the ability of cross-cultural communication, and take into full consideration the different thinking patterns, cultural backgrounds, and linguistic expressions of foreign audiences and Chinese people to achieve equivalent understanding.

2. Three-dimensional transformation of eco-translatology

In 2001, Prof. Hu Gengshen put forward the theory of eco-translatology and enriched its connotation in the next decades. It is an ecological approach to translation studies, or translation studies from an ecological perspective. Prof. Hu Gengshen believes that eco-translatology has three foundations: the cognitive approach of "the sequence chain," the ecological characteristics of "similar/isomorphic," and the theoretical system of "adaptation/selection" [6]. The idea of eco-translatology originates from Western ecologism, Eastern ecological wisdom, and the doctrine of biological selection [7]. The principle of eco-translatology is "multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptive selection," and the translation process is similar to the adaptation and selection of natural ecology, which is "a cyclical alternation of the translator's adaptation and selection" [8]. The three-dimensional transformation is the guiding method proposed by eco-translatology, including linguistic transformation, cultural transformation, and communication transformation. In translation, translators should make multi-dimensional transformations from the original language to the target language according to the principle of adaptive selection, in order to achieve a harmonious balance between linguistic expression, contextual effect, and communicative intent. Thus, a text with a high degree of multi-dimensional transformation is formed. In recent years, the combination of eco-translatology and translation practice has been widely applied, providing an emerging perspective and methodology for the international publicity translation of political texts.

3. Multi-dimensional transformation in the keynote speech of China's president at the opening ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation

3.1. Linguistic dimensional transformation

"Linguistic dimensional transformation" refers to the fact that the translator, in the process of translation, restores as much as possible the linguistic form and style of the expression of the original work, and conveys the linguistic beauty of the original work. Therefore, when translating, it is necessary to avoid mechanically copying the linguistic structure and literal meaning of the original text, and adaptive transformation should be made in terms of words, syntax, and rhetoric.

Example 1:
我曾经讲过，古丝绸之路之所以名垂青史，靠的不是战马和长矛，而是驼队和善意；不是坚船和利炮，而是宝船和友谊。

I once said that the pioneers of the ancient silk routes won their place in history not as conquerors with warships, guns, horses, or swords. Rather, they are remembered as friendly emissaries leading camel caravans and sailing ships loaded with goods.

China's President demonstrated the "Silk Road spirit" in his speech at the first Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, and he reiterated it at the third forum, using the rhetorical device of metaphor to emphasize the reasons why the "Silk Road spirit" can flourish. The translation of the metaphorical words in the speech is as follows: "战马和长矛、坚船和利炮" (*zhanmahechangmao*、*jianchuanhelipao*) corresponding to "骆驼和善意、宝船和友谊" (*luotuoheshanyi*、*baochuanheyouyi*), which refer to "war" and "peace" respectively. If the strategy of direct translation is adopted here, the text will appear rigid and stereotyped, with incomplete semantic expression and a slightly redundant juxtaposition structure. Therefore, the translator has added "conquerors" and "emissaries," which not only convey the inner meaning of the text, but also further call on all countries to strengthen cooperation and strive to become emissaries of peace and friendship on the "Silk Road," as well as to build bridges of cooperation between countries.

Example 2:
共建"一带一路"坚持共商共建共享，跨越不同文明、文化、社会制度、发展阶段差异，开辟了各国交往的新路径，搭建起国际合作的新框架，汇集着人类共同发展的最大公约数。
Belt and Road cooperation is based on the principle of "planning together, building together, and benefiting together." It transcends differences between civilizations, cultures, social systems, and stages of development. It has opened up a new path for exchanges among countries and established a new framework for international cooperation. Indeed, the BRI represents humanity's joint pursuit of development for all.

Chinese is a parataxis language, whereas English is a hypotaxis language [9]. Chinese sentences, especially in political texts, usually appear in long blocks and often omit the subject and its correlative elements, with each clause separated by a comma. However, English has a subject-verb-object structure and a clear hierarchy of gerunds, determiners, complements, as well as correlatives. A typical case can be seen in this example. The translator divided the original sentence into four parts, and each part is supplemented with the subject "it" or "BRI," which is well adapted to the translation ecology of the target language.

Example 3:
十年栉风沐雨，十年春华秋实。
The past decade has been a journey of dedicated cooperation and fruitful outcomes.

There are two four-character Chinese idioms, "栉风沐雨" (*zhifengmuyu*) and "春华秋实" (*chunhuaqiushi*), respectively referring to "people travel or work despite wind and rain" and "spring flowers and autumn fruits." This is also one of the linguistic characteristics in which Chinese and English differ, that is, Chinese is full of four-character phrases while English is not. If the phrases are translated word by word, the sentence may be too long and redundant for the target readers; thus, the translator transformed them into "dedicated cooperation" and "fruitful outcomes," which make it clear that it is the joint effort of Chinese people and the members of BRI that achieves such fruitful outcomes. Furthermore, the translator also paid attention to the antithesis of the two phrases. In addition, though not as neatly paralleled as the original text, the translator omits one of the "十年" (*shinian*) and combines the two clauses to make it more concise and smoother to

the target readers. Thus, the translation techniques the translator used in the linguistic dimension are mainly amplification, phrasing, free translation as well as combining sentences.

3.2. Cultural dimensional transformation

"Cultural dimensional transformation" refers to the fact that the translator must have a deep understanding of the cultural connotation of the original text, in order to eliminate the existing cultural gap and to better interpret the cultural connotation of the original text. Social culture is the product of life, and language is the carrier of culture [10]. The Belt and Road Initiative, as a key initiative of China, is rich in Chinese cultural characteristics, therefore translators should focus on adapting to the cultural background of the readers of the target language when translating, and selecting words that they can understand.

Example 4:
我们要坚持目标导向、行动导向，咬定青山不放松，一张蓝图绘到底。
We need to stay focused on our goal, take results-oriented actions, persevere, and keep moving forward until our goal is met.

The verse "咬定青山不放松" (*yaodingqingshanbufangsong*) is from the poem "Bamboo and Rock" by Zheng Xie of the Qing Dynasty, meaning that the bamboo is deeply rooted in the green mountain. It anthropomorphizes the bamboo and conveys its divinity and tenacious vitality. The reference to this verse in the speech here means that we must be persistent, strong, and unyielding in drawing closer to our goals and proving them through our actions.

Example 5:
我们要有乱云飞渡仍从容的定力
We need to remain clear-eyed and undisturbed in a volatile world

The verse "乱云飞渡仍从容" (*luanyunfeidurengcongrong*) comes from one of Mao Zedong's seven-syllable quatrain (a four-line poem with seven characters to a line and a strict tonal pattern and rhyme scheme), which refers to the imperturbability of the pine tree on the cliff, regardless of the billowing cloud. Its figurative meaning here is that Chinese people should remain deliberate in the volatile world.

When translating such familiar Chinese poems as "咬定青山不放松" (*yaodingqingshanbufangsong*) and "乱云飞渡仍从容" (*luanyunfeidurengcongrong*), the translator did not translate them word by word, but translated them into "persevere" and "clear-eyed and undisturbed in a volatile world" by the strategy of free translation, which not only expresses the real meaning behind these two verses, but also looks concise and clear, so that it is not lengthy and unintelligible for the target readers. Since there is no corresponding expression of the Chinese seven-syllable quatrain in English and the verses here are mainly figurative elements, it is better to use simple words and phrases that can be understood by the target readers.

Example 6:
我们追求的不是中国独善其身的现代化，而是期待同广大发展中国家在内的各国一道，共同实现现代化。
The modernization we are pursuing is not for China alone, but for all developing countries through our joint efforts.

"独善其身" (*dushanqishen*) comes from *The Mencius*, which means that when a person is unwilling, he should clean himself and focus on improving his personal cultivation and morality. It is one of the Confucian ideas but is used here to emphasize that China will not be the only country to achieve modernization but wish to see all the developing countries' modernization. Thus, the translator did not put "独善其身" as a traditional spirit but translated it into only one word "alone," which not only presents its real meaning but also avoids the misunderstanding that "独善其身" means selfishness and single dominance. In short, the translator usually adopts the free translation strategy in the cultural dimension.

3.3. Communicative dimensional transformation

"Communicative dimensional transformation" not only requires the translator to translate the linguistic and cultural connotations contained in the source language, but also to convey the author's communicative intention. In this speech, some words and sentences do not merely have literal meanings, they have special implied meanings formed in the ecological environment of the source language. Therefore, the translator must express their deeper meanings in translation and make the appropriate adaptive selection to reach the communicative intent.

Example 7:

"一带一路" 合作从 "大写意" 进入 "工笔画" 阶段，把规划图转化为实景图，一大批标志性项目和惠民生的 "小而美" 项目落地生根。

Belt and Road cooperation has progressed from "sketching the outline" to "filling in the details," and blueprints have been turned into real projects. A large number of signature projects and "small yet smart" people-centered programs have been launched.

Both "写意" (*xieyi*) and "工笔" (*gongbi*) are two kinds of painting techniques in Chinese painting. The former refers to the painting method that focuses on the expression of the subject's mood and spirit through concise and indulgent strokes, while the latter refers to the meticulous realism that emphasizes the beauty of the lines. In English, they are translated into "traditional Chinese painting freehand" and "meticulous traditional painting," while in this speech, their meanings have been derived to illustrate that the Belt and Road Initiative has moved from a macro-planning to the polishing of details. Therefore, when translating these two phrases, the translator took into consideration that foreign readers may not understand the relationship between these two traditional Chinese paintings and the Belt and Road cooperation. Thus, the translator translates them as "sketching the outline" and "filling in the details," which allows foreign readers to understand the deep meaning behind these two Chinese phrases, achieving an adaptive transformation and conveying the speaker's real intention.

Example 8:

让我们谨记人民期盼，勇扛历史重担，把准时代脉搏，继往开来、勇毅前行。

Let us meet the expectations of the people, assume responsibilities entrusted to us by history, closely follow the trend of the times, and press ahead with energy and enterprise.

In this sentence, "把脉" (*bamai*) is a diagnostic method in which a Chinese medicine practitioner presses the patient's arteries with his hands, and based on the pulse, he will understand the inner changes caused by the disease. "把准时代脉搏" (*bazhunshidaimaibo*) in the text is to utilize the metaphorical meaning of pulse-

taking, which refers to keeping up with the volatile trends of the times. The translator grasped the inner meaning of the original text rather than translating its literal meaning as "feel the pulse of the times," otherwise foreign readers will be confused and fail to understand the speaker's intent. Combined with the above examples, we can find that the translators have adopted the translation strategy of free translation to better achieve the effect of communication with foreign readers.

4. Conclusion

The proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative not only promotes the economy of the countries along the route but also promotes the exchanges between Chinese culture and foreign cultures, especially the dissemination of Chinese culture, which in turn improves the prosperous development of the language service industry. When translating political texts with distinctive Chinese cultural features, particular attention should be paid to maintaining political sensitivity as well as faithfulness and accuracy. The translation of this speech accomplishes the high degree of adaptive selection from the linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions, and provides effective guidance for the Belt and Road publicity as well as the translation of Chinese political texts for international publicity.

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