

Strategies for English Translation of Hanfu Culture from the Perspective of Cultural Translation

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Abstract

The proposal of Susan Bassnett's view on cultural translation theory plays an important guiding role in the embodiment of cultural connotation and the realization of translation purpose in national culture. In recent years, as a subcultural phenomenon, "Hanfu movement" has begun to leap out of the national border with the help of the Internet. The colorful costume features and cultural characteristics of Hanfu make Chinese costume glow with endless brilliance. The English translation and introduction of costume plays an important role in the publicity of national culture. From the perspective of cultural translation, explore the cultural connotation of Hanfu, explore the translation of cultural loaded-words such as representative style design names, embroidery techniques and costume propaganda in ethnic costumes, and reasonably adopt translation strategies such as literal translation and interpretive translation under the principle of taking culture as the basic translation unit, so as to realize the equivalent exchange of cultural functions and give full play to the translator's subjectivity as much as possible. Make the translation with The Times. The translation strives to reflect the characteristics of Hanfu culture from the cultural level, ensure the readability of the translation at the linguistic level, and then promote the spread of Hanfu culture in a wider range.

Keywords: Hanfu, cultural translation theory, costume culture

1. Introduction

Under the current "Belt and Road" initiative, China continues to strengthen the exchange of textile and garment culture between China and foreign countries. Costume civilization has long had the dual significance of material and spiritual development. The exchange of textile and garment culture between China and foreign countries not only includes trade exchanges based on physical products and production technology, but also includes the translation of relevant national costume culture.

Originating from the continuous social folk activities of the nation, national dress is not only an important carrier for the effective dissemination of local folk culture, but also an important factor for enriching people's material and spiritual life. From the perspective of communication, national costumes can reflect the social civilization, living customs and customs of a country or nation vividly; From the cultural point of view, Hanfu culture is a totem of the social culture of the nation, which contains unique cultural factors.

2. Culture Translation Theory

From the 1920s to the 1960s, linguists represented by the linguistic school, the functional school and the Structuralist school began to make in-depth discussions on translation from the perspectives of semantics, descriptive linguistics, semiotics and applied linguistics. They divided languages into the most basic units of translation. Attempts to interpret translation methods from the perspective of linguistics (Zhang Liping, 2015). In the 1980s, with the rise of translation culture, translation studies have reached a new stage. In 1990, Suzanne Bassnett and the Belgian-American scholar Andre Lefevere compiled and published the book *Translation, History and Culture*. As a representative of the school of cultural translation, Bassnett (2004) believes that the basic unit of translation should be culture, which changes from the accepted "linguistic perspective" of words, sentences and texts to the "cultural perspective", that is, the so-called cultural turn (Tengwei, 2006).

After that, Bassnett discussed the specific meaning of cultural translation view: (1) Translation should take culture as the basic unit and expand from the linguistic level to the cultural level; (2) Translation is not only a simple process of language correspondence, but also a process of cultural exchange; (3) Translation should not be limited to the interpretation of the source text, but should achieve the same effect in the cultural function of the target language; (4) The principles and norms of translation should evolve with the development of historical periods to meet the needs of cultures and different groups in a given culture. In short, the core idea of Bassnett's "cultural translation view" is that translation is not a pure language activity but is closely related to the culture on which language depends. Bassnett believed that translation should achieve the communication between the outside and the inside of culture and strive for the equivalence of the source language and the target language in terms of cultural functions.

3. Domestic and Foreign Cultural Translation Studies

At present, there are a lot of researches in the field of national culture translation both at home and abroad. Cultural translation is a discipline that studies and explores the external relations and internal rules among language, culture and translation. It has always been a frontier subject in the academic research of translation theorists

at home and abroad.

There are many major research works and theories in this field. Internationally, since the 1970s, western translation scholars have begun to conduct cultural studies from the cultural level. They have shifted translation studies from prescriptive studies at the linguistic level to descriptive studies under cultural consideration, which marks the beginning of the cultural shift in contemporary Western translation studies. As one of the main representatives of the cultural translation view, Susan Bassnett's cultural translation view mainly includes: translation should take culture as a unit, not stay on the previous text; Translation is not only a simple process of decoding and encoding, but also an act of communication. Translation should not be confined to the description of the original text, but to the functional equivalence of the text in the target culture. Different historical periods have different translation principles and norms, but these principles and norms are ultimately to meet different needs. Translation is to meet the needs of culture and the needs of different groups in a certain culture.

In the early 1980s, the concept of "cultural translation" was officially introduced into China. One of the earliest articles on cultural translation in China was *Translation and Culture* published by Liu Shan in *Translation Communication*, in which he pointed out that translation should achieve cultural equivalence and advocated that translators should faithfully and appropriately reflect the target national language through a national language, thus sounding the clarion call to discuss translation from a cultural perspective. Subsequently, Mr. Wang Zuoliang continued to contribute to the development of cultural translation studies and pushed cultural translation to its peak. In 1984 and 1985, he published two articles, "Comparative Culture in Translation" and "Translation and Cultural Prosperity", which made it clear that translation cannot be separated from culture, and the biggest problem is related to culture, because some things in culture can only be understood, but not expressed. How to choose words to convey the meaning of God is a great test of the translator's skills. All these show the close connection between translation and culture.

Subsequently, a group of domestic scholars turned their attention to the relationship between translation and culture and wrote a series of articles and monographs, which greatly

strengthened the discipline construction in the field of cultural translation. For example, Wang Ning's *Cultural Turn in Translation Studies*, Yang Liu's *Translation Theory in the Cultural Perspective*, Liu Miqing's *Theses on Cultural Translation*, Wang Bingqin's *Cultural Translation Studies*, etc. The results will be presented from the following three aspects: positioning culture, promoting the establishment of translation theory and valuing the translator's initiative choice.

There are few researches on the English translation of Hanfu culture. Guo Huiwen and Yang Zhen analyzed the significance of external communication of Hanfu culture, carried out cultural output through external communication with innovative carriers, and then proposed corresponding communication strategies to solve the problems encountered in the process of Hanfu communication. The translation of Hanfu culture into English is of great significance for carrying forward traditional Chinese culture and demonstrating cultural self-confidence. Chen Ke and Hu Cuihong sorted out the problems in the English translation of Xi'an Hanfu culture in the process of external communication and summarized the principles and strategies that should be followed in English translation. Xu Sai examined the entire Han folk dress system from the cross-angle of folklore and costume research, described and analyzed the main representative Han folk dress customs, collected and sorted out the costume-related folk customs, and explored the folk cultural significance behind these folk customs through these folk customs. Taking Hanfu videos on the overseas video platform You Tube as the research object, Xie Wenxiao adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis methods to analyze the current situation of overseas communication of Hanfu videos, and further proposed optimization countermeasures for cross-cultural communication of Hanfu videos. Throughout these studies, there are few studies on the English translation of Hanfu, and even fewer studies from the perspective of cultural translation, and no specific strategies for English translation are proposed, which is the problem that the current research needs to solve.

4. Strategies for English Translation of Hanfu Culture from the Perspective of Cultural Translation

Cultural translation is to solve the relationship between language, culture and translation.

According to its characteristics, the translation standards of Han costume publicity cannot fully follow certain translation standards but should be based on the translation standards and principles of different periods to meet the needs of different cultural groups, and the Han nationality culture should be taken as the unit. The process of English translation is not only a simple decoding and encoding process, but also pays more attention to the dissemination and exchange of Hanfu culture, which requires that the international spread of Han culture. Therefore, it should not be limited to the description of the original text but should pay attention to the realization of the equivalent function of the text in English culture.

4.1 Domestication

Domestication refers to the localization of the source language, focusing on the target language reader and using the commonly used expression to convey the original information. Naturalized translation requires the translator to be close to the reader in the target language, the translator needs to speak like the native author, the original author needs to talk directly with the reader, and the translation needs to be transformed into the native language. Naturalized translation helps readers to deepen their understanding of the target text and improve its readability and appreciation.

In the process of translation, the translator should also consider the audience's cognitive mode, thinking mode and value concept, and take into account the user's acceptance. In order to make the target readers better understand Hanfu culture and appreciate the beauty of Chinese culture, domestication is also one of the translation strategies commonly used by the author when translating Hanfu culture.

Example 1

ST: 汉服

TT: hanfu

First of all, the translation of the two words "Hanfu" also needs to be examined and compared to make the best choice. We can translate "nationality + costume" into "Han costume" or "Han Chinese clothing", or use pinyin translation to directly say "hanfu".

Example 2

ST: 曲裾袍

TT: Diagonal body wrapping with curved lapels

For example, the central word of the word “裾” is “train”, and the other components embody the appearance respectively. In this case, the qualifier, that is, the applicable object, is found first, which can be translated as “total +with+ shape + central word”, that is, “diagonal body wrapping with curved lapels”. In this way, for example, “直裾袍” can be translated as “diagonal body wrapping straight lapels”.

4.2 Foreignization

Foreignization means that the translator approaches the author or the source language, and adopts the expression habits of the source language to convey the content of the original text. The purpose of using foreignization strategy is to fully consider the differences of national culture, preserve and reflect the characteristics of foreign nationalities and language styles, and retain the exotic flavor for the translated readers.

4.2.1 Literal Translation

Hanfu is a unique culture of the Chinese nation, with strong uniqueness, and many words in English have no corresponding words. In order to retain the characteristics of Chinese culture and reflect the characteristics of Chinese clothing culture, translators often need to use literal translation when translating relevant texts.

Example 3

ST: 交领

TT: Cross-collar

“交领” is popular in the dynasties of the Han, Tang, Song, Ming and other eras, and can be worn with the sleeve-cross. Hand-collar is a characteristic of Hanfu, and this term is very common in texts related to Hanfu. Because the word “cross collar” cannot be found in Western clothing, it refers to the intersection of the left and right of the garment, and the literal translation of “crossed-collar” is more accurate to convey the original meaning.

In English reports of Hanfu, the word “交领” is usually translated directly into “crossed collar”, which accurately conveys the original meaning. In this way, for example, “坦领” can be translated as “open-collar”.

4.2.2 Transliteration

Hanfu conveys the nation’s values, ways of thinking, customs, lifestyles, traditional customs, religious beliefs and other information.

Translation is not only the conversion of language, but also the transplantation of culture. Translation is closely related to language and culture. Because translation is an interlingual conversion activity, the existence of cultural differences makes it very difficult to translate culturally connotation words. Through transliteration, this difference can be made up.

Example 4

ST: 马面裙

TT: Mamianqun

Mamianqun, a traditional Chinese skirt worn by the Han Chinese women as lower garment item in Hanfu and is one of the main representatives of ancient Chinese-style skirts. Therefore, its unique cultural connotation should be taken into account when translating abroad. The translator adopts transliteration to achieve the effect of defamiliarization, while maintaining the meaning of the source text.

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4.2.3 Explanation Translation

There is a big difference between Chinese and English, so many Chinese clothing cultural words have no equivalent in English, which leads to the vacancy in the meaning of words. In this case, the annotation method is often used in the translation of relevant texts to make up for this gap in meaning.

Example 5

ST: 褙子

TT: Sleeved over-dress

“褙子” refers to a straight collar, usually worn over other clothes. Here, in order to avoid readers’ misunderstanding of “褙子”, the translator adds some explanatory words, translated as “Sleeved over-dress”, to complement and improve the meaning of the original idiom, so as to express the meaning of the original idiom in the context.

5. Conclusion

The relationship between Chinese and English languages, Hanfu culture, and Chinese-English translation should be solved from the perspective of cultural translation. According to the characteristics of cultural translation, the translation of Hanfu into English cannot fully

follow certain translation principles, but should be based on Zhuang culture, not limited to the existing lexical meanings. The examples listed in this paper are more suitable for the translation of exhibition introduction texts and cultural exchanges, with the purpose of satisfying the communication and dissemination of Hanfu culture. Translators should choose different translation strategies according to different needs and different cultural vocabulary, so as to realize the equivalent function of Hanfu culture in English culture. The English translation strategy proposed in this paper is limited to the translator's personal translation practice. Although it is not perfect, it can also provide certain reference significance for the translation of Hanfu culture.

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