

Research on Chinese-English Translation of Xi'an Public Signs from the Perspective of Ecological Translation

Xie Dan

Xi'an Traffic Engineering Institute, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China

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Abstract: Xi'an is a representative of the development of Chinese culture and history. Proper translation of Xi'an public signs can help foreign friends better understand Chinese culture and make accurate behavior. The translation quality of Xi'an public signs is not uniform. There are some problems such as errors in spelling and grammar at the linguistic level, ambiguity caused by cultural differences and weak awareness of cross-cultural communication, which have a certain impact on cultural exchanges. Based on this, this paper expounds the theoretical concept of eco-translatology, applies the three-dimensional transformation method of eco-translatology to the translation of public signs, so as to make the translation have the same function as the original in multi dimensions, improve the quality of Chinese-English translation of public signs in Xi'an, and promote the vigorous development of Xi'an's internationalization.

1. Research background

1.1 Literature review

With the deepening of China's internationalization, it is an inevitable trend to provide appropriate and accurate translation of public signs for international friends. Ge wen ya et al. discussed the central idea of eco-translatology and the main linguistic features of public signs. From the perspectives of linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension, they deeply analyzed the problems existing in public signs translation and proposed adaptive translation strategies (Ge et al., 2017). The rapid development of tourism has attracted many foreign friends to visit China. The quality of English translation of public signs directly affects the influence of foreign friends on China. Wu Xiao cited some typical cases to analyze the error in the English translation of public signs with the help of eco-translatology. From the perspective of adaptive selection theory, it proposes that translators should constantly adapt themselves to the translation ecological environment and choose the most appropriate translation method to optimize the translation (Wu, 2019). Ye Hui studied the translation level of public signs in Shiyan people's Park from the perspective of ecological translatology, analyzed the adaptive transformation of its translation from three-dimensional perspective, and proposed a set of theories and practical methods of Chinese-English translation of public signs in Park (Ye, 2016). The level of Chinese-English translation of public signs in public places directly affects the cultural image of a city. Ge Yajing analyzed the current situation of public signs translation from the perspective of eco-translatology, explored the existing problems, and put forward the strategies of literal translation, free translation and zero translation for public signs translation (Ge, 2015). According to the theory of eco translatology, Zhang Hongmei divided the process of public signs translation into three stages and pointed out the translation standards of translators in each stage. Before translation, translators should be clear about their responsibilities and prepare for translation. Multidimensional selective transformation should be balanced in translation, and translation criteria should be used to test translation after translation (Zhang, 2015).

1.2 Purpose of research

Xi'an is not only a representative of Shaanxi Province, but also a historical and cultural representative of Chinese culture. Public signs are one of the important ways to publicize the city of

Xi'an to the outside world. The proper and proper translation is convenient for foreigners to carry out activities in Xi'an, and it can also show the good language and humanistic environment of Xi'an. Public signs are widely used in Xi'an city. In addition to delivering some order or warning information, they also shoulder the important mission of spreading culture. However, there are many problems in the existing English translation of Xi'an public signs, such as English spelling and grammatical errors, Chinese English and improper use of words. These translation errors bring trouble and inconvenience to the travel of foreign friends. They also affect the cultural image of Xi'an city and even the international image of Chinese culture. Therefore, from the perspective of eco-translatology, it is of great significance to study the C-E translation of public signs in Xi'an.

2. The theory and current situation of eco translatology

The founder of ecological translation theory is Professor Hu Gengshen, a famous translator in China. In the study of translation, Professor Hu Gengshen added the selection and adaptation principle of Darwinian evolution, expanded and perfected it continuously and tested it in practice, forming an important new translation theory. This theory is based on the study of ecology and holds that translation is the choice for translators to adapt to the ecological environment of translation. Translation is not a simple equivalence and transformation between two languages, its content involves life, communication, society, culture and other aspects (Fang, 2017). The ecological environment of translation is a world consisting of the source language, the source text and the target language. It is an organic whole which includes society, culture, communication, language, and interrelated and interactive with clients, readers and authors. The adaptation and selection of translation is that the translator adapts to the translation ecological environment composed of the target language, the source language and the original text. The translator chooses to optimize the translation from the perspective of the translation ecological environment (see Fig. 1). Choice and adaptation are the nature of translation. The process of translation is a continuous cycle of adaptation and selection.

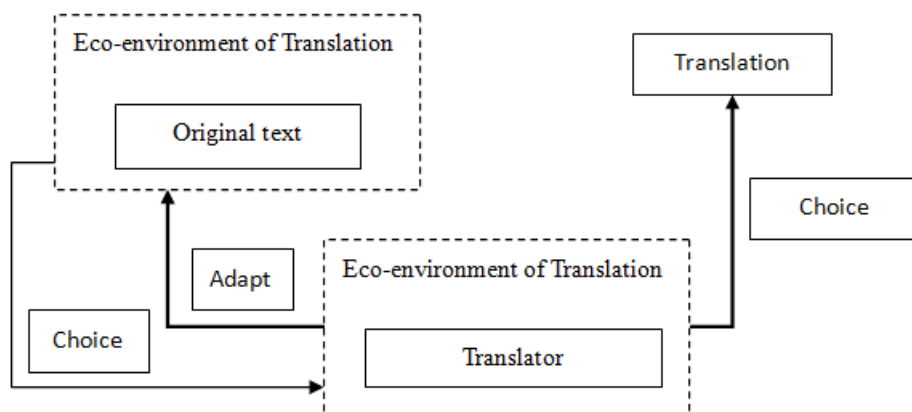


Fig.1 Selection and adaptation of translation ecological environment

The specific translation method of eco translatology is “three-dimensional” transformation, that is, the adaptive choice transformation of language dimension, communication dimension and cultural dimension. The translator's adaptable transformation of linguistic expressions in translation belongs to the linguistic dimension, the purpose of Bilingual Communication belongs to the communicative dimension, and the interpretation and transmission of bilingual cultural connotations belongs to the cultural dimension (He et al, 2016). The specific guidance of ecological translatology to the Chinese-English translation of Xi'an public signs is that the translator should not translate according to his own will, but put himself in the specific ecological environment of translation and comprehensively consider all elements of the translation environment. In order to translate Xi'an public signs with high level and high quality, we should pay attention to the flexible conversion of language dimension, communication dimension and culture dimension, so as to

provide the readers with the accurate expression and proper use of words.

3. Problems in chinese-english translation of xi'an public signs

3.1 There are errors at the language level

Rapid economic development in Xi'an has led to industrial progress in all aspects, and more and more documents and statements need to be published. The readers of public signs are not all Chinese users, so it is necessary to translate public signs into various language forms, among which there are language problems in English translation. For Xi'an public signs translators, grammatical or spelling errors are low-level errors. In the process of C-E translation, translators should try their best to avoid such errors, but they still exist in some Xi'an public signs. The translator does not understand the meaning, cultural connotation of a word in Xi'an public signs, the difference between the word and its synonyms, and the standard of English public signs. In translation, improper use of words may occur. English public signs have corresponding format standards, but some of the translated public signs are not standardized. In different places of Xi'an, public signs of the same content present different versions. Such translation will bring troubles or cause misunderstanding to foreign friends who come to Xi'an to travel and work. This will damage the image of Xi'an and is not conducive to its international development.

3.2 Cultural differences lead to ambiguity

China and the West have different historical development and cultural background, so there are differences in thinking mode and human customs between them. If the translator does not understand these differences, there will be ambiguity or ambiguity in the process of translating Chinese into English. Apart from the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, there are cultural vacancies in some aspects. There is no corresponding English to express meaning, which causes the translator to fabricate or even use Pinyin when translating public signs. In terms of the content of public signs in Xi'an, the translation of cultural dimension has become a stumbling block in the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture and the promotion of Xi'an. For example, "old" in Chinese means old age, but also shows respect for the elderly. But "old" in English means old and useless. Such differences in meanings may lead to misunderstandings among foreigners when translating "senior citizen first ". This will affect providing a satisfactory and warm living, entertainment and working environment for foreign friends, and hinder the improvement of the internationalization level of Xi'an city.

3.3 The awareness of intercultural communication is weak

From the perspective of communicative dimension, the quality of C-E translation of public signs is reflected in whether they achieve their communicative purposes. Due to the weak awareness of cross-cultural communication, English public signs in some places of Xi'an fail to convey the meaning expressed in Chinese to the readers accurately, resulting in some foreign friends acting differently from the content expressed in the signs. Some Xi'an public signs do not have corresponding English public signs, which makes it inconvenient for foreign friends to understand the content. Word-by-word mechanical translation of Chinese public signs forms Chinese English, which slows down the communication of Xi'an public signs. The translator completely fails to consider whether Chinese-English translation achieves communicative intentions. Most of the public signs with English translation are warning content, rarely involving some professional terms and information, which reduces foreigners' understanding of certain information. This situation is not conducive to the vigorous development of Xi'an's foreign exchange work.

4. The application of chinese ecological translatology in the c-e translation of xi'an public signs

From a theoretical point of view, translators should actively adapt themselves to a particular translation ecological environment, and make appropriate adaptability transformation and selection from all dimensions to further improve the translation, but this is not a realistic requirement. From

both theoretical and practical perspectives, language, communication and culture are always the focus that translators need to pay close attention to, as well as the three dimensions of inevitable transformation in translation. At the same time, there are internal logical relations among these three points. Therefore, the specific application of eco-translatology in C-E translation focuses on the three-dimensional transformation, which means that translators should focus on the adaptation transformation of language, communication and culture in C-E translation under the principle of adaptive selection and multi-dimensional adaptation.

4.1 The transformation of language dimension

When translating Xi'an public signs, translators should avoid mechanical word for word translation. Although such translation has little influence on the understanding of foreign friends, it would be absurd to see this kind of English translation of public signs. Therefore, for the C-E translation of Xi'an public signs, we can not blindly translate them from Chinese to English according to the language form of the original Chinese. Translators who play an important role in the whole process of translation should attach importance to translation work and improve their abilities in both Chinese and English. Once it is decided to complete the task of translating a public sign, the translator should take the responsibility of pre translation, in translation and post translation. In addition, all translators should constantly learn and consolidate English grammar knowledge, so as to avoid the problem of language dimension. When the translator is in the dilemma of choosing vocabulary and sentence pattern, he can use the authoritative translation or conventional translation for reference to complete the translation task of public signs.

4.2 The transformation of communicative dimension

For the introduction of political and historical events, the translation should be accurate and complete, that is to say, only use the simplest language to express the time, place, process, characters and other real information of the event. This kind of Chinese-English translation can help foreign friends to understand Xi'an culture objectively and comprehensively. Sometimes there is implicit cultural knowledge in the content of Chinese public signs, so translators can add appropriate translations to explain the corresponding content. The government should strongly support the C-E translation of Xi'an public signs. From the perspective of communicative dimension, the English translation of Xi'an public signs should keep pace with the times and be updated regularly. Nowadays, with the rapid development of language form and content, people have higher and higher requirements for language use. Based on the actual situation, it is suggested that the English translation of Xi'an public signs should be updated at least once every three years.

4.3 The transformation of cultural dimension

From the perspective of eco-translatology, the transformation of cultural dimension requires translators to pay attention to the different cultures in the Chinese and English environments, so as to avoid misunderstanding of the meaning of language. For the translation of public signs, the main purpose of cultural dimension transformation is to present the cultural connotation and warning with Xi'an characteristics to foreign friends. Xi'an public signs, including a large number of historical and cultural knowledge, such as anecdotes of celebrities and explanations of historical events in the ancient city, have historical development characteristics and Chinese spirit. Therefore, in the process of translation, the translator should first transform the Chinese materials into intralingual ones, then interpret the historical and cultural information involved, and finally use Chinese-English translation techniques to complete the cultural transformation of Chinese. Therefore, before translating, translators should fully understand the meaning of Chinese public signs, including the cultural information implied in them. When the cultural connotation of the original is fully understood, the English translation can be easily understood by foreign friends.

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