

Study on Translation of Scenic Spot Introduction Texts from the Perspective of Three-dimensional Transformation

-- Take Guangyuan A-level Scenic Spots as Examples

Xinya Qiao¹, Xinyu Mo^{1,*}

¹ Foreign Language College, Guangxi University of Science and Technology, Liuzhou, 545006, China

* Corresponding author: Mo Xinyu (Email: morganz@126.com)

Abstract: With the development of globalization, the world has become accessible, and the transnational tourism industry has been booming. In each tourist attraction, there are a large number of Chinese-English bilingual introductory text, which are the information carriers to show the international image of the city, and have the characteristics of simplicity, formality, and clarity. However, from the current translation of the introductory text, the problem of mistranslation is very common, which not only fails to play the role of cultural dissemination, but also misleads the public and has a negative impact of a city. The texts in this paper are all obtained from the field study of 47 A-level scenic spots in Guangyuan. This paper takes the three-dimensional transformation translation method of Eco-Translatology as the guiding theory, exploring the problems existing in the translation of the introductory texts of the A-level scenic spots in Guangyuan, analyzing and discussing proper strategies.

Keywords: Bilingual Introductory Text; Eco-Translatology Studies; Scenic Spots; Three-dimensional Transformation; Translation Strategy.

1. Introduction

The introductory text has always been an important way for tourists to know the scenic spots better, with the characteristics of strong practicability and concise style. Guangyuan, known as Lizhou in ancient times, is located in the northernmost part of the Sichuan province, at the junction of Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. Wu Zetian, the only female emperor in Chinese history and an outstanding politician, was born here. Guangyuan is a provincial-level historical and cultural city, with the Jianmen Pass Beauty Spot, Tangjiahe National Nature Reserve, Huangze Temple, Thousand Buddha Cliffs and Jueyuan Temple and so on. As of 2023, there are 47 A-level scenic spots in Guangyuan, and each A-level scenic spot possesses English-Chinese bilingual introductory language, which is enough to show that due to the development of global tourism, bilingual introductory language of scenic spots in Guangyuan, as a famous historical city, has received a great deal of attention. However, because the English translation of each scenic spot is carried out by themselves, the quality varies, and there is no unified norm or standard, which leads to the problem of frequent English translation errors, urgently need to be unified and corrected.

2. Introduction of Eco-Translatology

2.1. Development History and Related Research

As early as in the middle of the 19th century, Darwin put forward "the survival of the fittest", which refers to the competition between species and organisms, and the struggle between species and nature, and those who can adapt to nature will be selected to survive. Nowadays, the development of globalization is unstoppable, and after people's basic survival

needs are guaranteed, they begin to pay attention to the development of environmental ecology. On this basis, Eco-Translatology was proposed by Mr. Hu Gengshen, a professor of Tsinghua University, in 2001, and was fully launched in 2009. As the first local translation theory in China, it is rooted in Chinese philosophical theories and takes the ancient oriental ecological wisdom as the core of its thought, which is highly adaptable and focuses on the overall concept. Its core concept is to utilize ecological rationality and conduct a comprehensive and holistic study of translation from an ecological perspective. In the last decade, more than 3,000 articles have been published on Eco-Translatology studies, which can be categorized into three different research directions:

① Theoretical research category, the number of articles in this category is the least, but the research value is high. For example, Prof. He Gangqiang (2022) published a paper titled "Eco-Translatology is Vibrant, New Branches of Academic Tree Growing Frequently" in Shanghai Translation, proposing how to deepen and expand the philosophical foundation of Eco-Translatology, how to further highlight the ecological paradigm of innovation and standardization, and so on;

② Research review, this category of articles is more based on helping scholars to understand the development of the theory more quickly, as well as the outlook on the development of the theory. For example, the paper "Twenty Years of Eco-Translatology: Happy to See Growth, Expecting New Highs" published in Foreign Language Teaching by two scholars, Huang Zhonglian and Wang Shichao (2021), summarizes and affirms more than ten book reviews of Professor Hu Gengshen's two most iconic works on Eco-Translatology, and summarizes the path of theoretical development and research paradigm, as well as looks forward to the direction of future theoretical development and

prospects.

③ Applied practice category, which has the largest number of literature studies, scholars use Eco-Translatology studies as a theoretical support to guide translation practice and translation teaching. The most popular arguments are the study of translation ecology and three-dimensional transformation. In translation practice, the most prominent ones are tourism text and foreign propaganda translation. Scholars Long Ting, Gong Yun and Liu Xuan (2018) published an article in *Shanghai Translation*, "Research on the English Translation of 5A Scenic Spots in Jiangxi Province--Based on the Three-Dimensional Transformation of Eco-Translatology", the article analyzes the English translation of 5A scenic spots in Jiangxi Province through three-dimensional transformation, and the outstanding problems in the translation, and proposes the corresponding strategies, in order to provide a brand-new perspective for the English translation of scenic spots in Jiangxi Province, and to further achieve the success of cross-cultural exchanges and the output of Jiangxi's excellent historical landscape culture.

2.2. Inadequacy of Theoretical Research

Eco-Translatology Studies has received the attention from a large number of scholars and professors in the research community since its emergence, and although some scholars have invested a lot of time and energy in researching it, and have also obtained a lot of good academic results, there are still some deficiencies in Eco-Translatology studies, as seen in the results so far. The research focuses on the translation practice guided by the theory, and the research on the theory itself is not deep enough. As far as the field of tourism text is concerned, Eco-Translatology studies also have some deficiencies.

Eco-translation emphasizes the doctrine of the mean, which is an idealistic philosophy with too much subjectivity. It emphasizes moderation, but it does not explain how to reach a balance, only few words say "too much" and "not enough", which is a little bit vague. In fact, this is also a common problem of many theories, which only put forward an ideal state, but did not give practical methods to guide how to reach this ideal state. Focusing on the reproduction of various elements of the translation, and at the same time giving full play to the translator's mobility, letting them constrain each other and finding the balance point.

2.3. Three-Dimensional Transformation

The theory holds that the translation process is an alternating cycle of translator's adaptation and translator's choice, where translator's adaptation refers to the adaptation to the translation ecological environment, and translator's choice refers to the choice of the degree of utilization of the translation ecological environment and the choice of the final text. "The translation ecological environment refers to all the external activities that affect the main body and development of translation, and the main body here is in a broad sense, i.e., all the living organisms that participate in translation activities, including the author of the original text, the translator, the readers, the initiator of the translation, the sponsors, the publishers, the marketers, the editors, etc. The external environment may include all the activities that are related to the translation activities. And the external environment may include the natural economic environment, linguistic and cultural environment, and socio-political environment related to translation activities" (Fang Mengzhi

2020). The principle of translation is multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptive choice, and the translation method emphasizes three-dimensional transformation, the three dimensions are linguistic dimension, which refers to the need to restore the form of the original text, syntax, grammar, vocabulary, etc.; communicative dimension, which requires the expression of the original text's communicative intent; and cultural dimension which involves linguistic conversion, that is, cultural conversion, fusion of canonical religions and so on. According to Eco-Translatology, if we want to improve the quality of translation, the translator should adapt the three dimensions of language, communication and culture to the ecological environment of translation to a higher degree when he/she carries out translation activities.

In general, the translation process of this theory is summarized that after decades of development, Eco-Translatology science has been widely discussed and applied. However, according to the amount of literature, it can be seen that there are a lot of articles applying Eco-Translatology science to the sign language of scenic spots, while there are not many researches on the English translation of introductory language and they are not systematic, this paper analyzes the English translation of the introductory text of the A-level scenic spots in Guangyuan from the perspective of three-dimensional transformation of Eco-Translatology science and proposes the corresponding translation strategies to provide theoretical perspectives and practical support for the improvement of the quality of its English translation.

3. Typical Errors of the English Translation Texts of Guangyuan A-level Scenic Spots

This paper is based on bilingual introductions texts in Guangyuan A-level scenic spots, the corpus presented here is the result of field study, and the research is combined with a large number of bilingual texts provided by the scenic spot staff. "According to the micro-multidimensional (especially linguistic, cultural, and communicative three-dimensional) transformational translation method embodied in the theory of Eco-Translatology, translators should adapt to the translation ecology and the translation environment in the three dimensions of language, culture, and communication in the creation of translations" (Sun Lin, Han Caihong 2021).

3.1. Language Dimension Conversion

"Translation is first of all a symbol conversion activity correctly written symbols is the primary premise and foundation of the linguistic dimension of the conversion, so the translation should follow the translation specifications to ensure that all kinds of symbols in the translated language are written correctly" (Wang Xiaoshan, Li Weibin 2019). The language dimension mentioned in Eco-Translatology studies mainly refers to the need to restore the formal syntax, grammatical vocabulary and other aspects of the original text in the translation process, while the English translation of many introductory phrases of Guangyuan's A-level scenic spots has spelling errors, word errors, reversed word order, grammatical errors and other problems.

3.1.1. Error Examples and Solutions

Example 1: 猿猴道 Located on the Jianmen Pass Beauty Spot. It was created by Sichuan people based on Li Bai's poem "Tough Shu Road", a road only 15 centimeters wide up the Jianmen Pass. On the introduction board, it

says:由于猿猴道, 鸟道坡陡, 路窄, and the translation is: "Because ape Nao road, footpath, slope steep, narrow road", regardless of the grammatical and syntax error, although the Chinese characters do not distinguish between upper and lower case, the English language has a strict distinction between upper and lower case, in this sentence, the upper and lower case of 猿猴道 is not standardized. For the case and the use of words such as low-level errors, just focus on the translation process of words and phrases can be standardized.

Example 2: In Tangjiahe Scenic Area, there is an translated introduction of *Lindera limprichtii*:区内分布: 常见于海拔1200-2000m的阔叶林或灌丛, 是组成常见阔叶林的主要树种之一 which is translated into "Distribution in the Area: commonly distributed in broad-leaved forests or bushes at the altitude of 1200-2000m. It is one of the main species of evergreen broad-leaved forests." Repetition are not very common in English, and in order to avoid repetition of the same word, pronouns will used more often. Conversely, Chinese prefer repetition, and pronouns are less often used. With the existence of this difference, appropriate adjustments need to be made in the process of translation. In the above sentence, there are many repetitions of words, and at the same time, there are defects in the sentence structure, which is too much word-for-word translation. An improved English translation could be "It is one of the main species in evergreen broad-leaved forests, normally distributed in broad-leaved forests or bushes at the altitude of 1200-2000m". The improved translation would be much clearer and more in line with English usage.

3.2. Cultural Dimension Transformation

Cultural dimension focuses on language conversion, cultural conversion, etc. In common parlance, it means that in addition to the language form itself, the translator should also pay attention to the cultural connotation behind the language. "Translation is not only about converting one language into another, but more importantly, it is about the communication and transmission between two cultures. The adaptive selection of cultural dimensions for conversion requires translators to pay attention to the transmission and interpretation of bilingual cultural connotations in the translation process" (Shang Jing 2017). This requires the translator to understand the differences between Chinese and English at the level of linguistic structure and grammar, as well as the social meanings and deeper significance of vocabulary and expressions in the context of the English culture, only in this way can the translator make the translation in line with the readers' way of thinking and cultural awareness, which is the key point that distinguishes the cultural dimension from the linguistic dimension.

3.2.1. Error Examples and Solutions

Example 1. In Jianmen Pass Beauty Spot, there is an introduction about The First Pass Monument: 此碑为雍正十二年(1734), 果毅亲王允礼奉召护送六世达喇嘛还藏, 并巡视沿途诸省驻防路过剑门关时, 被剑门关山的雄险深深折服所留墨宝. The translation is "In 1734, Prince Yunli was summoned to escort the Sixth Dala Lama to return to Tibet..." In this sentence, the word "亲王" is translated into "prince", whether in China or in the West, prince means the son of the ruler. Foreign tourists who see prince will misunderstand that Yunli is the son of the Yongzheng Emperor, while he is actually the younger brother,

and the the correct translation should be "duke". Such an error in translation is due to a lack of understanding of Western culture, which can easily lead to misunderstanding. The solution to the cultural dimension of the English translation error is to use the translation strategy of domestication, which is to localize the source language, to take the target language or the readers of the translation as the destination, and to adopt the expressions that the target language readers are accustomed to in order to convey the content of the original text. Domestication translation requires the translator to move closer to the readers of the target language. Domestication translation helps readers understand the translation better and enhances the readability and appreciation of the text.

3.3. Communicative dimension transformation

"The communicative dimension emphasizes the need to express the communicative intention of the original text, and from the analysis of the communicative dimension, the adaptive selective conversion of the communicative intention in the translation process is to require the translator, in addition to the conversion of the linguistic information and the transmission of the cultural connotations, to put the focus of the selective conversion on the communicative dimension, and to pay attention to the question of whether or not the communicative intention of the original text can be embodied in the translated text" (Hu Gengshen 2008). Therefore, translators should make clear the cultural connotation and communicative intention of the vocabulary when translating, and take the communicative object as the starting point to make adaptive selective conversion of the communicative dimension in the translated text. As an example, if the original text of the scenic area introduction language in the introduction of the words used in the magnificent atmosphere, want to let the tourists feel the feelings of praise, appreciation, then in the translation, to take into account the communicative intent, the translation also need to do discretionary use of words, to be able to let the communicative object to feel the emotions.

3.3.1. Error Examples and Solutions

Example 1. Huangze Temple is the temple of Wu Zetian, the only female emperor in Chinese history. It is located on the bank of the Jialing River in the west of the city, and has a large number of introductions and records about Wu Zetian. One of the introductions reads as follows: 中国封建时代, 是男权统治的时代。惟有大周皇帝武则天, 以巾帼称制, 以女儿称帝, 可谓古今一人, 独步千年。The original text describes how difficult it was for her to become an emperor under the general circumstances, and is full of affirmation and praise for her personal ability. "China's feudal era was an era of male dominance. Wu Zetian was the only female emperor during China's history of thousands of years". Such a translation is naturally without merit, because it only conveys the most basic information, in which the feelings contained in the original text can not be felt, and does not play a good communicative role, encountering such a situation, back-translation can be taken. The definition of it in the Dictionary of Translation is: "the process by which a text that has been translated into a certain language is re-translated into the original language. Intuitively, it is the process or result of translating from language A to language B, and then from language B back to language A, while the process or result of translating from language B back to language A is called back-translation" (Chang Xin 2023). It is the process

of matching the identity of the target language and the source language after the translation has already been completed, with the aim of testing the accuracy and quality of the translation in this way. After the English-to-Chinese translation is completed, the translation is then translated from Chinese to English as the original language to see if it can do the job of restoring the information, emotion and meaning of the source language.

If the reduction is not achieved, then the translation obviously still needs further revision. To achieve the communicative purpose, the translation can be augmented appropriately, such as the example mentioned above, if you want to express the same emotion in the English translation as in Chinese, you can expand and add some explanations on the basis of the original text, for example, "China's feudal era was an era of male dominance. As a female, Wu Zetian made unimaginable efforts to become the only female emperor in Chinese history of thousands of years, which can be said to be unprecedented". In this way, it ensures that foreign tourists can also feel the greatness of Wu Zetian and the difficulty of her achievements, and achieves the purpose of communication.

4. Conclusion

As we all know, the English translation of the introduction texts of scenic spots will directly affect the development of a city's tourism industry and its foreign publicity image. Looking at the problems in the English translation, we should strengthen the training and management and guide them to correctly carry out the English translation, and in order to make the translation achieve the purpose of cultural output and promote the internationalization of the tourism industry of Guangyuan City, we should take the three dimensions of Eco-Translatology as a perspective and achieve the real cultural communication effect instead of simply and baselessly carrying out direct translation. This paper takes the three-dimensional transformation theory in Eco-Translatology as a guide to organize and analyze the English translation of scenic introductory phrases, and discusses how the English translation effect can be further improved under the guidance of the theory to maximize the cultural communication. Although it only takes the A-level scenic

spots in Guangyuan as an example, the guiding significance of the theory is common, and we hope that it can be of reference value to the English translation of the introductory phrases of various scenic spots, so as to promote the development of the foreign tourism industry, and at the same time, make the Chinese culture go out to a broader world.

References

- [1] He Gangqiang, "Eco-Translatology is Vibrant, Academic Tree Grows New Branches Frequently--Ten Shallow Trends of Eco-Translatology Studies"[J]. Shanghai Translation,2022(01):16-2.
- [2] Huang Zhonglian, Wang Shichao. "Twenty Years of Eco-Translatology Studies:Seeing Growth and Expecting New Heights"[J]. Foreign Language Teaching,2021,42(06):12-16.
- [3] Long Ting, Gong Yun, Liu Xuan. "Research on English Translation of 5A Scenic Spot Signs in Jiangxi--Based on the Three-Dimensional Theory of Eco-Translatology"[J]. Shanghai Translation,2018(06):21-25.
- [4] Fang Mengzhi. "Revisiting the translation ecosystem"[J]. China Translation,2020,41(05):20-27+190.
- [5] Sun Lin,Han Caihong. "The English translation of culturally loaded words in The Beijing Folding: An Eco-Translatology perspective"[J]. Shanghai Translation, 2021(4): 90-94.
- [6] Wang Xiaoshan, Li Weibin. "Research on the Status Quo of English Translation of Introductory Texts of Scenic Spots from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology Studies--Taking Mianyang A-level Tourist Scenic Spots as an Example"[J]. Journal of Southwest University of Science and Technology (Philosophy and Social Science Edition),2019,36(05):86-90.
- [7] Shang Jing. "The 'three-dimensional' transformation of the translation of the public announcement language of tourist attractions under the threshold of Eco-Translatology"[J]. Journal of Hebei University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition),2017,42(04):42-46.
- [8] Hu Gengshen. "Interpretation of Eco-Translatology"[J]. China Translation, 2008, 29(06):11-15+92.
- [9] Chang Xin. "A Study on 'Text-less Back-translation' 'Text-lost Back-translation' and 'Cultural Restoration'"[J]. Foreign Languages (Journal of Shanghai International Studies University), 2023,46(03):82-91.