

On Hsuan Tsang's Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory

-- A Case Study of the Buddhist Source Words in Hsuan Tsang's Translation of *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra*

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Abstract: Hsuan Tsang, who left a large number of translation works for later generations, is one of the most influential translators of Buddhist scripture translation in the history of Chinese translation. His Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory has greatly promoted the development of Chinese translation. There are some related papers about "Hsuan Tsang Translation" and "Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory", but few related studies can be found on the relationship between Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory and the translation of Buddhist source words. Therefore, this paper selects *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* to explore the application of Hsuan Tsang's Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory in the translation of Buddhist source words.

Keywords: Hsuan Tsang, Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory, *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra*, Buddhist source words.

1. Introduction

In the translation history of the glorious Buddhist classics and original annotated collections in China, Buddhist source words hold a very important position. Buddhist source words refer to a new vocabulary that emerged in Chinese during the translation of Buddhist scriptures and the preaching of Chinese monks. Buddhist source words account for the majority in Buddhist scriptures, and their translation greatly promoted the integration of Buddhist language translation with Chinese religious and historical culture, which greatly enriched the world translation culture [2]. During the period of Buddhist scripture translation, Hsuan Tsang's Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory greatly promoted the development of Chinese translation theory. In language usage, people usually overlook the origin of Buddhist terminology. However, to ensure the practicality and pertinence of language research, we cannot neglect the study of this type of vocabulary simply to preserve the purity of loanwords. In fact, since loanwords make up the majority of Buddhist scriptures and have a more profound influence on the Chinese language, scholars have paid greater attention to them. Therefore, from the perspective of word origins, we include these translated terms in the category of "Buddhist source words" in order to learn its origin more closely and gain a deeper understanding of their meaning and usage. This article will take the *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* as corpus and study the application of Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory in the translation of Buddhist source words. In the translation history of the glorious Buddhist classics and original annotated collections in China, Buddhist source words hold a very important position. Buddhist source words refer to a new vocabulary that emerged in Chinese during the translation of Buddhist scriptures and the preaching of Chinese monks. Buddhist source words account for the majority in Buddhist scriptures, and their translation greatly promoted the integration of Buddhist language translation with Chinese religious and historical culture, which greatly enriched the world

translation culture [2]. During the period of Buddhist scripture translation, Hsuan Tsang's Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory greatly promoted the development of Chinese translation theory. In language usage, people usually overlook the origin of Buddhist terminology. However, to ensure the practicality and pertinence of language research, we cannot neglect the study of this type of vocabulary simply to preserve the purity of loanwords. In fact, since loanwords make up the majority of Buddhist scriptures and have a more profound influence on the Chinese language, scholars have paid greater attention to them. Therefore, from the perspective of word origins, we include these translated terms in the category of "Buddhist source words" in order to learn its origin more closely and gain a deeper understanding of their meaning and usage. This article will take the *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* as corpus and study the application of Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory in the translation of Buddhist source words.

2. Background

2.1. Overview of the translation of Buddhist scriptures

Through the translation and study of Chinese Buddhist scriptures and texts, a large number of Sanskrit terms are commonly used in ancient Chinese Buddhist texts and have become an important component of the modern Chinese Buddhist lexicon system with the further development of Chinese vocabulary. As modern Chinese civilization has developed, this has become an important part of the entire modern Chinese Buddhist vocabulary system, including terms such as "Pú Sa (Bodhisattva)", "Yán Luó Wáng (Yama)", "Shì Jiè (world)", "Chà Nà (split second)", "Wǔ Tǐ Tóu Dì (A pose in which both hands, both knees, and the head touch the ground at the same time. It is the most respectful bowing gesture in ancient Indian Buddhism, symbolizing utmost admiration.)", "Yīn Yuán (cause and effect)", "Guō Bào (karmic retribution)", "Gòng Yǎng (offerings/alms-

giving)", "Yì Shí (consciousness)", "Jiě Tuō (liberation\enlightenment)", "Yì Chén Bù Rǎn (untainted by defilements\unpolluted by any dust)", "Yōu Yuán (karmic connection or karmic affinity)", "Wú Yuán (no karmic connection or no karmic affinity, (In Buddhism, “Yuán” refers to the law of cause and effect, and “Yōu Yuán” or “Wú Yuán” indicates whether there is a past karmic or causal relationship between two people or things.))”, "Jié (Kalpa or aeon, (In Buddhism, "Kalpa" refers to a unit of a time cycle, which can be understood as the length of a world or cosmic cycle. A kalpa is believed to include the entire process of creation, existence, and destruction of the entire universe.))", and so on.

From the perspective of grammar structure and cultural history, Chinese was first influenced by the phonetics of ancient Indian Sanskrit. The form of reverse-cutting rhyme used in Chinese phonetics is also related to the research on the translation of ancient Chinese Buddhist scriptures and texts. Nowadays, scholars who study ancient Chinese Buddhist texts have read a large number of Sino-Sanskrit terms and pinyin transliterations. In Buddhist texts translation, some characters require proper pronunciation, which has led to the preservation and transmission of certain phonetic methods and four-tone cutting methods found in ancient Chinese texts. The translation of Buddhist texts in literary Chinese has had some influence on other forms of translation in modern Chinese Buddhist texts, to varying degrees.

Buddhist scriptures have a unique literary style, and the translators of these scriptures strive for fidelity while presenting their own literary style. The literary style of Buddhist scriptures has greatly influenced subsequent writers, including poets and literary figures. Many of their works exhibit literary qualities originating from Buddhist scriptures, reflecting the profound influence of Buddhist scriptural translations on the Chinese language and literature.

2.2. Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra

The *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* or The Heart Sutra is considered the quintessence of Buddhist scriptures. Due to its concise and precise wording, it is easy to memorize and has become widely popular in Tibet. In modern times, it has been translated into many languages and spread throughout the world. The *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* is not an independent sutra but rather a summary of all the key points from the 600-volume of *The Great Prajñā pāramitā Sutra*. The text is concise yet profound, and each word and phrase is filled with profound Buddhist philosophy. It consists of only 260 Chinese characters and explains the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness through the concepts of the Five Skandhas, Three Realms, Four Noble Truths, and Twelve Links of Dependent Origination. It teaches that through the practice of Prajñā pāramitā, one can transcend all suffering and attain ultimate Nirvana, thus achieving the enlightenment of a Bodhisattva. As the core of the entire Prajñā literature, The *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* is a significant Buddhist text that continues to inspire and guide practitioners around the world.

As the essence of Mahayana Buddhism, the Heart Sutra, originally in Sanskrit, has been translated into Chinese in thirteen different versions. The most commonly used translations were made by Kumarajiva, Hsuan Tsang, Zhi Yi, Fa Xian, Shih Hu, and so on. Among them, Hsuan Tsang, a renowned Chinese monk in the Tang Dynasty who was proficient in Sanskrit and Chinese, and had a deep understanding of Buddhist doctrine, produced the version in the year 649, which is considered the most famous and widely

circulated. It is the shortest in length, simplest in style, deepest in meaning, and most highly regarded among the nearly ten thousand volumes of Buddhist scriptures in the Chinese Buddhist Canon. The concepts, history, and characters in the sutra have been highly valued in the process of the spread of Buddhism to the West, and have become a significant cultural factor in the East.

2.3. Buddhist source words

In Chinese, foreign loanwords and translated words can generally be classified into three categories: the first consists of borrowings and translations from the European Regions, the second is terminology related to Buddhist culture that emerged with the introduction of Buddhist culture and inevitably combined with Chinese vocabulary, resulting in many loanwords and translations, and the third consists of borrowings and translations from the West. Among these, the second category of loanwords and translations related to Buddhism has had the greatest impact. These words have a long history, a wide range of dissemination, and a rich cultural connotation, and have had an undeniable impact on the development and evolution of the Chinese vocabulary system.

The Chinese vocabulary influenced by Buddhism can be mainly divided into four types. The first type is neologisms, which refer to the new words created to translate concepts from Buddhist scriptures, as well as words created based on Buddhist doctrines and ideas. The second type is Chinese words with Buddhist meanings, which refers to original Chinese words that have been given a new meaning related to Buddhism to express certain concepts. The third type is composite words with strong derivational abilities that appeared in Chinese vocabulary with the spread of Buddhism, forming new words by combining them with other Chinese words. The final type is the emergence of extended meanings for newly coined Buddhist terms. During the long process of the spread and development of Buddhist culture, some Buddhist terminology gradually became secularized and acquired new connotations in addition to their original meanings in Buddhism. These words are still used and have been passed down to the present day [5]. Translating these cultural terms is an important cross-cultural communication activity, serving as a bridge for intercultural exchange and reflecting the core elements of a nation's history, culture, and customs in its language system.

Later, scholars classified these Buddhist terms according to their translation methods into transliterated words and translated words. Translated words in Buddhist vocabulary refer to new words created by abandoning the original phonetic form of Sanskrit and using Chinese materials and methods of word formation to express new concepts in the inherent forms of the language. As a result, we often overlook and misunderstand the etymology of these Buddhist words and are not aware of their relationship with Buddhism when we use them in our daily lives.

While transliterated words in Buddhist vocabulary refer to words translated directly from the Sanskrit pronunciation to Chinese pronunciation. Transliterated words are numerous in Buddhist vocabulary and are an important part of it, but they have not widely entered into the basic Chinese vocabulary for two main reasons. Firstly, most of the transliterated words in Buddhist vocabulary are proper nouns in Buddhism. Secondly, the Chinese characters used for transliterated words do not have a strict and fixed form. This is mainly manifested in the translation of the same Sanskrit word, where several different

Chinese characters with similar sounds may be used.

The vocabulary of Buddhism carries significant linguistic and cultural value, as well as a strong religious connotation. Translating these culturally distinctive words is an important cross-cultural communication activity, serving as a bridge for communication between different cultures. It is also a core element that most directly and sensitively reflects the historical and cultural background, as well as the customs and practices of a nation's language system.

2.4. Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory

Generally speaking, languages can be translated into each other because there are extensive conditions for meaning conversion between languages. However, translatability is not absolute because there are various limitations at various levels of language, which make the complete realization of interlingual meaning conversion impossible. These limitations are the so-called translational limits [6]. It is these translation limits that cause certain untranslatable phenomena in the translation process, and forcing a translation can result in inaccurate or even obstructed communication. In this case, transliteration, as an indispensable translation method, can play an important role in resolving the untranslatability of language. Translation strategies refer to the translator's consideration of whether to follow the source language culture or the target language culture in the process of translation. The former is what we commonly refer to as the domestication strategy, while the latter is the foreignization strategy.

Buddhist scriptures' translation originated from the spread of Buddhism in China. The translation history of Buddhist classics and collections of original translations or annotations of Buddhist sutras officially began during the late Eastern Han period and continued until the prosperous Tang and Song dynasties in the Yuan Dynasty, lasting for over a thousand years. This marked the first time in Chinese translation history that there was a large-scale upsurge in the study of the history of the translation of Buddhist sutra originals. Initially, the method of Buddhist scriptures translation was mainly through oral transmission, mostly by foreign monks. The appearance of prominent figures such as An Qing and Zhi Qian in China laid a solid foundation for the development of Buddhist scriptures translation. During the period of the Eastern Jin Dynasty to the end of the Sui Dynasty, Buddhist sutras translation developed rapidly, and a large number of prominent translators emerged, including Shi Daoan and Kumarajiva, who proposed the concept of translation circles. The translation methods also became more diverse. The Tang Dynasty was the heyday of Buddhist sutra translation, and one of the four great masters of Chinese Buddhist sutra translation, Hsuan Tsang, emerged during this period. The translation of Buddhist scriptures during the Tang Dynasty in China had reached its peak.

At the age of 15, Hsuan Tsang began his journey to seek knowledge by entering the Buddhist monastic order and studying in Indian temples during two annual trips to the Tang Dynasty. He visited many famous masters both in China and abroad, which allowed him to gain insights into various schools of thought, theories, and values of both the Eastern and the Western. During his tenure as the chief of the translation bureau, Hsuan Tsang not only undertook the immense task of translating the Buddhist scriptures but also imparted his translation methods and experiences to numerous disciples. He trained thousands of disciples,

including Kui Ji, Yuan Ce, and Jing Mai, who played a significant role in the subsequent translation of Buddhist scriptures in China and made great contributions to the development of the discipline of translation theory. The translation of Buddhist scriptures in the Tang Dynasty, especially by the time of Hsuan Tsang, can be considered the pinnacle of the art of translation. When Hsuan Tsang passed away, Emperor Tang Gaozong was deeply saddened and believed that his death was a great loss for the Tang Dynasty [8].

Through his arduous 19-year-long efforts, Hsuan Tsang laid a solid foundation for the large-scale translation of Buddhist scriptures that took place in the mid-to-late Tang Dynasty. The basic organizational system that he established for the translation bureau was largely preserved and carried forward in later translation bureaus.

According to the Records of the Western Regions of the Great Tang Dynasty, Hsuan Tsang traveled far to India to obtain Buddhist scriptures and upon his return to Chang'an, he dedicated himself day and night to his studies without wasting a single moment. He translated a total of 75 volumes of Buddhist scriptures and commentaries with his students, amounting to 1,335 scrolls [10]. During the translation process, he conducted repeated analyses and research on his translations and developed the Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory based on the summary of previous Buddhist sutra translation experiences. This principle is one of the important theories in Buddhist translation. The word "untranslated" does not mean not to translate here, but the use of transliteration in translation. In Buddhist translation, there are cases of "untranslated terms" include situations where the original text and translation have semantic contradictions, multiple meanings are lost in translation, or the original semantic cannot be fully expressed in translation, thereby causing difficulties in using free translation and only allowing transliteration. The five cases of "untranslated term" (transliteration) are as follows:

(1) The principle of not translating due to regional secrets: For religious mantras or secret codes that have mystical significance, the original Sanskrit pronunciation is retained [10]. "Not translated due to secrecy: Religious mantras or secret phrases with a mysterious color are retained in their original Sanskrit pronunciation and translated using transliteration method due to their profound and mysterious meaning." Hsuan Tsang believed that words with a mysterious quality should not be translated directly, but rather should be transliterated, such as "dhāraṇī." In Buddhism, "dhāraṇī" refers to a mantra, which is translated into Chinese as "Mì Mì Yǔ (secret language)" or "Zhēn Yán (true words)," which are the secret language of Buddha and bodhisattvas. However, mantras possess a mystical quality, and if translated directly into "Mì Mì Yǔ (secret language)" or "Zhēn Yán (true words)," the original Buddhist meaning and mystical quality may be lost. Here, untranslated means not translating based on the literal meaning of the word, the effect goes beyond the literal meaning of the words. For many Buddhist followers who are not familiar with the transliterated content and do not ponder over the literal meaning, they can focus on their reverence for Buddha during recitation without interpreting the text in a worldly sense [1]. As a result, the mysticism and solemnity of the Buddhist language are maintained.

(2) The principle of not translating due to multiple meanings: When a certain expression has multiple meanings,

transliteration is used to avoid confusion in interpretation. When a specialized term in a Buddhist scripture has multiple meanings, to avoid losing its intended meaning, it should be transliterated instead of translated, as is the case with "Bó Jiā Fán (Bodhisattva, Sanskrit: बोधिसत्त्व)". In Sanskrit, "Bó Jiā Fán (Bodhisattva)" has various meanings, none of which can be fully conveyed by a single word in Chinese. To ensure that the original text is not distorted, transliteration is preferred. Inspired by the principle of "not translating due to multiple meanings", transliteration can also be used appropriately for some culture-specific terms that carry unique cultural connotations in the source language [3]. These culture-specific terms refer to words that bear a special cultural meaning specific to a language or culture. In the process of translation, if an equivalent term cannot be found in the target language, attempting to translate it would result in forced associations or even misunderstandings.

(3) The principle of not translating due to lack of equivalence: Some Buddhist source words do not exist in the target language. In this case, free translation cannot clearly express the connotation and characteristics of the source culture but make the translated text long and clumsy on the contrary [10]. Thus, translators often adopted transliteration. When a specialized term in a Buddhist scripture has multiple meanings, to prevent the loss of meaning, it should be transliterated rather than translated, as with "Yan Fu Tree (Sanskrit: jambu)". Yan Fu Trees only grow in India and other regions around India and have no corresponding equivalent in China, so when translating, only the original pronunciation can be preserved. Due to the constraints of geography, environment, history, religion, economy, and other factors, various ethnic groups create and develop their own cultures in specific times and spaces, resulting in the uniqueness of their respective cultures [3]. As the social and cultural development of a particular ethnic group progresses, the distinctiveness of their culture is inevitably stamped upon the vocabulary. These words, which bear the stamp of the local culture, are often difficult to find equivalents for in another culture, and the principle of "not translating due to lack of equivalence" is an appropriate method for solving this problem. For example, in English it is difficult to find equivalents for certain Chinese cultural items, so transliteration is used, such as "zongzi" for sticky rice dumplings, "mantou" for steamed buns, and "erhu" for a two-stringed bowed musical instrument. Similarly, for some foreign words that have no equivalent in Chinese culture, we can also apply this principle, such as "coffee", "tango" and so on.

(4) The principle of not translating due to established expressions: In the glorious Buddhist translation history, many words already have widely circulated translated versions, so the handling of previous literature is followed during translation. This principle has practical guidance for the translation of personal and place names in current times. Some translation methods have been widely used and accepted by the public due to long-term usage. Therefore, it is more appropriate to adhere to the existing translation methods for the convenience of communication. For example, the translations of "Sūn Zhōngshān" as "Sun Yat-Sen", and "Kǒng Zǐ" as "Confucius", respectively, as well as the translation of "Beijing" as "Peking", have become deeply ingrained in people's daily communication. Therefore, there is no need to change the original translations.

(5) The principle of not translating due to ideographic

accuracy: This principle refers to situations where there are words with similar or identical meanings in the target language, but they cannot convey the exact meaning in the source language, so transliteration is used [10]. According to the needs of Buddhism, words with special meanings or functions should also be transliterated, as some vocabulary can evoke a sense of respect when transliterated, while a translation may cause people to overlook its importance. For example, the word "Jiā Shā" (Sanskrit: kashaya) refers to the robe worn by Buddhist monks. If it is directly translated as "gown worn by monk", the educational significance of the robe in Buddhism would be obscured and it would be equated with ordinary clothing. Therefore, it is more appropriate to transliterate it as "Jiā Shā".

Based on the above, we can see that Hsuan Tsang put forward the significant theory of Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory over a thousand years ago, which foresaw the necessity and feasibility of transliteration. The transliteration method guided by this theory is still one of the indispensable and important means of translation in our translation practice at that time and even today.

3. The application of Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory in *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra*

Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra is known as the "core of Buddhist scriptures". Despite its brief length of just over two hundred words, it contains numerous Buddhist terms such as "Bō Rě (Prajñā or wisdom)", "Bō Luó Mì (pāramitā or perfection)", "Shè Lì Zǐ (sharira or Buddhist relics)", "Wǔ Yùn (five skandhas or five aggregates)", and "Sì Dì (Caturstaya or Four Noble Truths)", which have gradually become an integral part of Chinese as they have infiltrated into people's daily lives through language, history, and culture. Hsuan Tsang fully utilized the Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory, in his translation, striving to preserve the original expressions in *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra* as much as possible. Below are a few examples of his translation analysis:

3.1. Bō Rě (Prajñā)

"Prajñā-pāramitā" is a Sanskrit term which is transliterated as "Bō Rě Bō Luó Mì Duō" in Chinese and "the wisdom that has done beyond" in English. It is an important concept in Buddhist teachings. The term "Prajñā" refers to wisdom, while "pāramitā" means to cross over to the yonder shore of salvation. In other words, it represents the use of wisdom from Buddhist doctrine to reach the yonder shore of salvation, to leave the misery of life and death, and to attain the realm of liberation beyond birth and death [7].

There are several main forms of Prajñā in Buddhism. The first is Wén Zì Bō Rě (textual Prajñā), which refers to the various expressions in Buddhist scriptures that convey the philosophical and existential truths of Buddhism. However, these contents are not the essence of these truths themselves. As Hui Neng, a great Chinese Zen Buddhism master said, "The wonderful truths of all Buddhas are not related to language." Thus, Zen Buddhism developed the idea of "Teachings beyond words and language can directly reveal the true nature within human beings, allowing one to realize the Dharma and attain Buddhahood."

The second form is Jing Jiè Bō Rě (Prajñā of the Dharmadhatu), also known as the wisdom of observation. The

wisdom of observation is called "Guān Zhào Bō Rě" in Chinese, in which "Guān" is to study various objective phenomena of "Dharma" through observation and enlightenment. And "Zhào" means to observe and perceive the various objective phenomena and to understand the meaning of various phenomena and the principle of equality of all phenomena with a bright and clear mind. Only by carefully observing and understanding the nature of all phenomena can we gain a thorough understanding and achieve enlightenment. It is only through experiential realization that one can progress to higher levels of understanding, such as the famous line from Chinese poems: "Hundreds and thousands of times, for her I searched in chaos, suddenly, I turned by chance, to where the lights were waning, and there she stood!" or "Last night the wind blew the flowers to pieces, alone I climbed to the top of the tower, gazing out towards the end of the world."

The third form is Shí Xiàng Bō Rě (ultimate Prajñā), which refers to the fact that there is no true essence or existence to anything. The concept of "all things being devoid of intrinsic nature" in Buddhism means that everything that appears to have a true nature lacks any such intrinsic nature.

When translating "Prajñā" into Chinese as "Bō Rě", Hsuan Tsang employed a phonetic translation method, as part of the Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory, which includes preserving original meanings as much as possible. The principle of not translating due to ideographic accuracy states that certain terms with special meanings or functions in Buddhism should be transliterated, as this helps to inspire respect for their original meanings [9]. Although Prajñā shares a similar meaning with "wisdom" or "intelligence", it is not identical to these concepts as they are commonly understood today. To translate it directly as such would strip it of its original religious connotations. Therefore,

3.2. Wǔ Yùn (skandhas)、Sì Dì(Catursatya)

"Wǔ Yùn" (The Five Aggregates\skandhas) and "Sì Dì" (Four Noble Truths\Catursatya) refer to the five components that make up a sentient being, including form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness. Form, or rupa in Sanskrit, refers to the physical body and the five sense organs, including the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body. Feeling refers to the subjective experience of pleasure, pain, or neutrality that arises in response to sensory input. Perception, or sanna, refers to the recognition and labeling of sensory experiences. Volition, or sankhara, refers to the mental activities that give rise to thoughts, intentions, and actions. Finally, consciousness, or vinnana, refers to the awareness and cognition of sensory experiences. These five aggregates are accumulated and intertwined within the mind, leading to confusion and obscuring the true nature of the mind's pure and radiant wisdom. The five aggregates are like a game of ball played on a fast-moving stream, where thoughts arise and pass away rapidly without pause. However, through the practice of insight meditation, one can gain insight into the true nature of the five aggregates and liberate oneself from suffering.

"Sì Dì" (The Four Noble Truths), transliterated from the Sanskrit term Catursatya, represents the fundamental teachings of Buddhism. According to Buddhism, all phenomena in the world are characterized by suffering, which is the First Noble Truth. Desire or craving is the cause of this suffering, known as the Second Noble Truth. The cessation of all mundane sufferings and the attainment of the ideal state of

Nibbana is the Third Noble Truth, known as the Cessation. In order to achieve the ultimate goal of Nibbana, one must practice the path, known as the Fourth Noble Truth or the Path.

The term "Dì" refers to the "truth" in Buddhist scriptures, while "Yùn" is the abbreviation of the Sanskrit term "Khandha", meaning "aggregate" or "collection". Hsuan Tsang adopted the principle of not translating due to ideographic accuracy to retain the mystical nature of these two terms in the Buddhist scriptures, while also using the the principle of not translating due to multiple meanings to recommend the use of phonetic translation when a specific term in a Buddhist text has multiple meanings to avoid losing the essence of the original text [9]. This principle is applicable to various types of texts in translation practice. If all terms are translated literally, the original flavor of the text may be lost, and readers may be misled. If translators were to rely solely on paraphrasing or translating the meaning of a term, they risk losing the original flavor of the text and even causing misunderstandings among readers. Hsuan Tsang's translation of "Dì" and "Yùn" demonstrates the effectiveness of phonetic translation in preserving the mysticism of the original Buddhist text.

3.3. Shè Lì Zǐ (śarīra)

The word " Shè Lì Zǐ (śarīra)" comes from Sanskrit and means "bones" or "relics". In Buddhism, scholars believe that śarīra refers to the merit accumulated by Buddhist practitioners through their spiritual cultivation, which often manifests as hard, gem-like relics of various colors. The term first appeared in the fourth scroll of The Dīrgha Āgama from The Long Discourses in relation to the relics of Gautama Buddha, and Hsuan Tsang used the previously established translation when he translated the term. Therefore, in the translation of the term "śarīra" in the *Prajñā pāramitā Heart Sutra*, the principle of not translating due to established expressions is adopted, which refers to the translation method of adopting commonly used expressions for certain translation terms without making any changes, and following the transliteration methods of previous translators.

The translation is a literary work that requires accumulated knowledge and experience. The experience of translation creators is based on the accumulation of literary experience, a large number of previous translations, and long-term engagement in the translation of Chinese texts. The cultural experience of translation creators is just as important and inseparable from the accumulation of traditional Chinese language and literary knowledge and experience. Therefore, the process of translation is an ongoing effort to build on this accumulated knowledge and experience to produce high-quality translations that convey the intended meaning accurately and effectively.

While translating, we can often rely on the theoretical and technical achievements of previous translators and others who have worked on creating translations [4]. If each translator creates a completely new translation or expression for every word, or translates every proper noun in their own way, they may disrupt the continuity of translation traditions and create confusion in the resulting translations.

4. Conclusion

Due to the structural and rhetorical differences between the Chinese and Sanskrit language families, a large number of vocabulary cannot be accurately translated between the two languages. Coupled with differences in historical background,

geographic environment, customs, and culture, there is an inherent untranslatability between the Chinese and Sanskrit. In this case, phonetic transliteration is a useful method for bridging the gap between these languages. In the translation of Buddhist terms, Hsuan Tsang's Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory has been well applied, and the translation of Buddhist terms has greatly promoted the practical application and development of this principle in the meantime. These two approaches complement each other, greatly enriching and promoting the exchange and development of Chinese and Sanskrit languages. Although the Five Principles of Non-Translation Theory was initially proposed for the translation practice of Buddhist scriptures, it still holds significant practical value in contemporary translation practices. It serves as a valuable guide for promoting cultural exchange between China and the West.

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