

# *A Report on the Translation of the History of British Civilization Contents*

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**Abstract:** This paper is a report on the translation practice of English-Chinese translation, which is selected from the British Civilization History. The book mainly analyzes the development of the history of British civilization, and discusses the development of British civilization comprehensively and systematically from the aspects of British politics, diplomacy, history and so on. The book is divided into four chapters. The translator selects the first chapter of the book for translation practice including p931-p942. The selected chapter focuses on British politics, colonial history and diplomatic relations. The report is divided into four parts. The first part is the task description. The second part is to introduce Newmark's text type theory and introduces in detail the translation strategies, methods and skills used in the process of translation. The third part is case study. The fourth part is the translator's summary of this translation practice.

## **1. Introduction**

The book is one of four books written by this professor who is also an expert in the history of British civilization. This book has introduced to us about British history, civilization, economics, politics and culture in an overall manner. All these are introduced to trigger our interest in British civilization and intensify our understanding to promote our intercultural exchanges so we can mutually learn those advanced things to complement our shortages, close the gap of development and achieve long-term development and win-win outcome. There are many translating difficulties in this new field, thus it has great potential for us to explore. This translation task aims at spreading more information about the history of British civilization. On the one hand, through this report the author hopes to get us better acquainted with relevant knowledge, helping us strengthening exchanges and cooperation.

## **2. Translation Process**

### **2.1 Translation Theories, Strategies and Methods Used**

The translation theory I have used in this thesis is Text Type proposed by Newmark. It includes three main types such as informative text, expressive text and vocative text.

Informative texts include non-literary works, academic papers, newspaper and magazine. The text emphasizes “authenticity” and the reality outside the language. Expressive texts have a personal style while informative texts are generally written in impersonal language, involving some

traditional idioms and metaphors. The core of this kind of text is “truth and reality”. What people care about is the content of what the author says, not the way he says.

The core idea of expressive text is expression. The author's unique linguistic form and content should be considered equally important. This kind of text emphasizes the power of the original author.

Vocative text calls for function-oriented text, and its core is to call on readers to act, think, feel and react such as product instructions, notices, instructions, advertising and so on which belong to the calling text. It emphasizes the reader as the center.

Through the accurate analysis of this work, it suits the feature of information-based text as this work tries to convey some specific information about the development of Britain’s civilization history. This author aims to make readers know more about Britain’s history by describing this country from different aspects such as economics, politics and its relations with other European nations among others. So it concludes that it can be viewed as information-based text.

## 2.2 Strategies Used

The translation strategies I have used is Domesticating strategy. It is agreed that translation strategies can be divided into two categories: foreignization and domestication.

The advantages of domestication strategy are that the translation version is fluent, easy to understand and easy to be accepted by the target language recipient, or to adapt to and meet the specific needs of the target language readers.

In a nutshell, based on the type of information-oriented text, the main focus is to express information about the development of history of British civilization and make those recipients accept and learn specific information. Thus, domestication strategy is used to translate the source text.

## 2.3 Methods Used

Transliteration refers to the translation of words in target language with similar pronunciation. Transliteration has no its own original meaning, but only retains its phonetic and written forms. In the process of translation, transliteration is used to translate names of some historical figures, some places, some wars and others.

Literal translation means that literal translation not only maintains the inner meaning of the original text, but also maintains the form of the original text, which refers to the recreation of the metaphor and so on. It should be pointed out that literal translation has its merits under the condition that the ideological content of the original works can be accurately expressed and does not violate the language form of the target text. It is helpful to preserve the style of the original works and, on the other hand, can be introduced into fresh ways of expression. Each language has its own vocabulary, syntactic structure and expression. It will be better to maintain the original flavor expressed by the original author. In the course of translation, literal translation has been used to recreate some information expressed by the original author just like some simile.

When there is a contradiction between the ideological content of the original text and the expression form of the target text, it is not appropriate to adopt the literal translation method. So the free translation method should be adopted. Free translation requires that the translation can correctly express the content of the original text, but it can be in the form of the original text.(Zhang Peiji). In the process of translation, something has been found that if I just translate some words literally, those Chinese readers will not understand the things translators want to convey. At that time, it is sensible to use free translation.

### 3. Case Studies

#### Case 1

Source Text: Even the tax on imported corn, which was almost sacred to the landowners who were the traditional support of Toryism, was about to be modified by the imposition of a sliding scale, when Lord Liverpool, who, for seventeen years had been Premier, died, and the progressive and reactionary sections of the Tory party split apart.

Target Text:对于一直以来支持保守党的农民来说,缴纳进口玉米的税款款项是必不可少的,而近来征收的税款将进行微调.此外,首相利物浦勋爵在任职 17 年后,便去世了.

Analysis: This sentence reflects the language characteristics of English, that is, the usage of long sentence. Choosing to divide sentence structure according to sentence meaning group, this translator cuts long sentences into Chinese short sentence which will be more in line with the language characteristics of Chinese running sentence. The translation of this sentence mainly adopts free translation methods, such as the treatment of the word “sacred”, which has multiple meanings, but is understood in this context. You can describe something as sacred when it is regarded as too important to be changed or interfered with. After combining with the context, it can be translated into indispensable matter. Such translation does not only follow the literal translation, but deeply expresses the meaning of the original author, which is in line with the characteristics of information-based text.

#### Case 2

Source Text: However, the tide was now running irresistibly in favour of Reform, and Sidney Smith’s comparison of the Iron Duke to an old woman trying to keep back the sea with a mop was a singularly happy one.

Target Text:然而,如今支持改革的潮流无法逆转,就此,西德尼·史密斯(Sidney·Smith)曾做了个奇怪却令人满意的比喻.他将铁公爵的行为比作是一个试图用扫把阻挡大海的老妇人.

#### Analysis:

Because the text is informational, the characteristics of informational text should be reflected in the translation process and no information should be omitted. But in the process of translating the original text, this translator has used adaptation translation method which makes the target text seriously deviate from the original text, missing a lot of information, but after the guidance of the teacher and classmates, another final translation can make the translation more accord with the characteristics of an informational text, accurately conveying information that the original author wants to convey information. When revising the translation, the translator has adopted the literal translation method to supplement the missing information. For example, the translation of “In favor of Reform” is omitted in the first draft. After absorbing suggestions from many aspects, the information is added, which is more in line with the characteristics of information-based text.

#### Case 3

Source Text: If we have been tempted to describe the condition of England after the Napoleonic war as Hell for the greater part of her population, we should have to find some word of more infernal implication to apply to that of the native Irish. Population was multiplying with the fatal rapidity that comes of utter recklessness, and the resources of the country, minimized as they were by inefficient and obsolete methods of cultivation, were less and less sufficient to maintain them. The land system was about as bad as it could be ; the landlord was separated from the peasant by a hierarchy of, middlemen, each of whom screwed and evicted with pitiless frequency.

Target Text:在拿破仑战争之后,如果我们试图将拿破仑战争后英格兰的状况描述为对其大部分人口来说是地狱,那么我们应该找到一些更具有地狱含义的词来适用于本土爱尔兰人的情况.正是因为英格兰人轻率鲁莽的行为,才出现了如今这副人口激增的局面.而该国的资源,因

低效,过时的人才培养方式,一点点的消耗殆尽,最终竟难以维系.土地制度也是难以想象的糟糕,地主和农民被分成了不同的阶级.并且,其他阶级也会不断的压迫这些底层人士,甚至排挤他们,是多么的冷酷残忍.

Analysis: The translation of this sentence adopts transliteration translation method. The Napoleonic War is a term, which can be directly transliterated to reflect the language and cultural characteristics of the source language. After searching for some information about this term, we learn that the term refers to the wars between 1803 and 1815, a continuation of the wars started by the French Revolution in 1789. It led to major changes in the armies and artillery of Europe, especially in the military system. With the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo (June 18, 1815), the belligerents signed the Treaty of Paris. After checking the background knowledge, we have a further understanding of British culture, which is conducive to cultural exchange.

#### 4. Conclusion

Through this translation task, the translator has gained a lot. The cultivation of translation ability is a cumulative process. Through the translation process and translation studies mentioned above, the translator has improved her own application of translation methods and accumulated valuable experience in translation practice.

The translation report aims at translating information-based text under the guideline of Newmark's text type theory. But it is hard to apply this theory to my translation version. Fourth, my capabilities are limited so this translator may make some mistakes like omission, the mistranslation of some long and complicated sentences, the wrong judgment of text type and the limited Chinese vocabulary with lack of delicate expression and wide encyclopedia. So there is still a long way for the translator to go to fully deal with these hurdles.

#### References

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