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Research on the Community Translators' Internal Behavior for the Huai River Culture Publicity Translation

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Abstract: In an internet era, global communication of local cultures has encountered various new challenges and opportunities. Fast response to the new demands and flexible role translators have become crucial in the publicity translation of regional cultures. Community translation was born in such a context. However, the research on community translation of the Huai River culture is still scarce and there are even less studies on the internal behaviour of community translators. This study probes into the internal behavior of community translators through case analysis at word, rhythm, image and sentence levels. The study suggests that the internal behavior of community translators should be valued; the awareness of loyalty to both SL text and SL culture should be aroused, and efforts should be made to cater to TL readers' demand. This study helps in-depth progress of translation behavior theory and contributes to wider global publicity of the Huai River Culture.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and internet-propped social networking, regional cultures are confronted with both challenges and opportunities [1]. As an important pillar in regional cultural communication, cultural translation and publicity should take those new trends and opportunities into account. Since the current cultural translation involves multiple tasks more than linguistic transition [2] [3], collaboration and even crowdsourcing have become a new choice for cultural translation [4]. In the process of cultural translation, translators as a community are worth close attention and research. However, few studies can be found on the behavior of translation community in regional cultural translation and publicity, and explorations on the internal collective translator's behavior are still less adequate.

2. The Huai River Culture

Archeological researches show the Huai River culture can be traced back to as early as 7000 years ago [5], which placed the region paralleled to the Yellow River Valley and the Yangtze River valley as the birthplace for Chinese civilization. In the history, the Huai River Culture grew through thousands of years interaction with other Chinese subcultures like the Central Plain Culture, Chu Kingdom

Culture and Wuyue Culture, and acquired mixed features of water theme [6], immortality and witchcraft. In terms of its geographical coverage, the culture reaches Shandong Province on the northeast, extends to the Central Plain on the Northwest, borders Hubei Province on the southeast and meet Zhejiang Province on the Southeast. The representative forms of the Huai River Culture vary at different historic stages. In East Han and Tang Dynasties, the Huai River Culture was mainly found in poems and ballads; later, it got enriched through ball games, shadow operas, acrobatics and storytelling in the North Song Dynasty. In South Song Dynasty, the culture declined due to frequent natural disasters and later thrived again after the Ming Dynasty when local dramas started to prosper [7]. Thanks to historic accumulation, the Huai River Culture has earned rich connotations in cultural form, customs and mentality and become very distinctive in regional and humanistic uniqueness [8]. However, like other subcultures worldwide, the Huai River Culture could not withstand strong impact by the industrialization and globalization and the following internet-based informatization threw it far behind cultures in developed regions.

In the new era, cultural revitalization has been listed as top priorities on the local governments' agenda. Great efforts have also been made by local governments on rejuvenating the Huai River Culture. Meanwhile, the fast-growing social networking and We Media have facilitated real-time and people-to-people communication of local culture. Apart from government-supported communication channels, non-governmental grassroots can also contribute a lot to regional cultural growth. With regard to this, the study focuses on the community translation and the internal behavior of community translators in the process of the international communication of the Huai River Culture.

3. Translator's behavior

The theory of translation action was first systematically proposed by German Scholar J Holz-Mänttäri in her book "Translatorisches handeln: Theorie und methode" [9]. Later, Theo Hermans used "translational behavior" to refer to almost the same thing [10]. Some scholars also prefer other words to describe the translation as an action like translator's act or translator's behavior, arguing that the translator functions as a central role and therefore should be stressed when the action is mentioned. According to Vermeer, translational action is an offer of information [11]. The translation action is also deemed as a move across languages and cultures [12]. Thanks to internet-based communication and social-networking, studies on translator's behavior have also extended to multimedia data decoding in an internet application environment [13]. Still some studies are shifted to other behaviors of the translator like information behavior [14]. No matter how varied the translator's behavior may turn to be, all the behaviors fall into two categories: the internal one and the external one [15]. At the time being, there is an obvious shift on academic focus from the translator's internal behaviors to his external ones. However, between internal and external translator's behaviors, more attention should be paid to the internal ones, so that text loyalty and faithfulness of the translator can be stressed at the initial stage of regional cultural publicity translation.

4. Translation Community

In recent years, translation industry has undergone transformative changes in any ways, one of which is manifested in the structural changes of translators. Translation, as an activity, is taking up a more dynamic and collaborative model. The community-based models have gained strong momentum, leading to various new challenges and environments for translation practice and research [16].

Community translation is also known as translation crowdsourcing, user-generated translation and collaborative translation. The participants of community translation are often untrained volunteers offering free translations with shared information and resources. In some sense, community

translation is far more than a dilettante, anti-professional movement [17]. Besides, community-based translators are often internet users engaged in media and publishing sectors with contemporary digital culture [18]. Compared to conventional individual paid translation, community one displayed more flexibility and less regulation [19].

For publicity translation of the Huai River Culture, community translators are often from higher learning institutions, local research institutions, governmental organs and regional NGOs. They are mainly local residents with strong sense of responsibility for cultural inheritance. They might not be very professional in translation, but really versed in new media communication and IT-based social networks. As a result, the publicity translation of regional culture should attach more importance to intensified awareness of loyalty to SL text and culture as well as service to TL readers.

5. The Internal Behavior of Community-based the Huai River Culture Translators

The internal translation behavior is a subjective and creative act based on linguistic conversion, which represents the conventional perception of translator's act. Although in the history when it comes to the creative acts of the translator, heated disputes have centered on contradictions: literal translation versus liberal translation, domestication versus foreignization, lax approach versus accommodating approach and SL centrality versus TL centrality. Despite different turns and shifts of translation research, loyalty and faithfulness have remained the basic principle guiding the translator's acts. The internal translator's behavior can be manifested at several levels including diction, rhythm, image and lexical structure.

5.1 Word Selection

For long, word selection has been one of the basic techniques in intralingual translation, as word has been deemed as at least an elementary unit for translation, if not the smallest one. The word selection also reflects a sort of freedom, which is manipulated by the translator in accordance with his understanding of faithfulness. Word-selection certainly falls within the realm of internal translation behavior, because no matter how liberal the word selection turns to be, the translator always believes his work at the word levels is loyal to the meaning of the source language or the purpose of the ST writer. Such loyalty guarantees the translation activity stays within the boundary of conventional translation theories. In community translation for regional culture, word selection is the starting point for group collaboration. For example, the Chinese term "*huaihe*" *(sound in Chinese)* has two different translation versions: one is the Huai River and the other is the Huaihe River. The only difference between the two lies in one more Chinese character "he" *(sound in Chinese)* which means river. Comparatively speaking, the first one indicates rigid closeness to the original: Huai is the river name while "he" is omitted since it is the same to river in English. The second version keeps "he" *(sound in Chinese)* to retain the original sound of Chinese to help readers get more about the SL culture. Both versions reflect the translators' good will for communication and understanding.

Another similar example is the translation of "*Huagudeng*" *(sound in Chinese)* which is China's national intangible cultural heritage popular in Bengbu City, Fengtai County and Yingshang County of Anhui Province [20]. Up till now, in terms of the corresponding English translation for its name, there are at least five or six. The most popular ones include "Huagudeng", "Flower Drum Lantern", "Flower Drum Opera" and "Flower Drum Song". From the perspective of translation, those names have their distinctive features: the first one is completely a transliteration from the sound; the second one is a word-for-word translation in which flower corresponds to "Hua" (sound in Chinese), drum to "gu" (sound in Chinese) and lantern to "deng" (sound in Chinese); both the third and the forth integrate the meaning with the generalization of the art form because opera and song represent two different forms of the same thing. From the perspective of loyalty, the first two are more faithful

without any added understanding from the translator. However, in some sense, they are less comprehensible, since transliteration is often ridden with ambiguity, variability, and out-of-vocabulary (OOV) words [21] and total word-for-word translation sacrifices the flexibility and smooth transition from SL to TL [22]. When it comes to liberal transition, the third and the fourth carry the translator's manipulation and deprive TL readers of imagination and pleasure of aesthetic search. Generally speaking, on the community translation for regional cultural publicity translation, it is of paramount importance to reach consensus among group members on translation strategies. Decisions should be made in accordance with the situation and context. At the initial stage, the liberal translation can minimize the distance between TL readers and SL text and culture. As target readers grow more familiar with the culture, the translation can be more literal since SL culture becomes more adhesive to the reader group.

5.2 Rhythm Selection

In international cultural communication, cross-modality translation is no longer a rare thing. The translation sometimes requires audial treatment, so rhythm really matters in translation and affords no negligence. For translators, the rhythm selection indeed requires imagination, creativity and wisdom from group minds.

Example 1: "豆腐美名千古传，发明公认属刘安，一心求得寿无边，'黎祁'意外胜仙丹"

Example 2："走水路"、"发水财"，"反弹琵琶"念水经。

Figure 1: Example 1&2

Translation Version 1.1: "It enjoys a history of a thousand years; Liu An was well-known as its inventor; Liu sought eternity by practicing Taoism; 'Liqi', an accidental product of alchemy, is much better the imagined panacea".

Translation Version 1.2: Tofu earns a history-honored reputation. It is widely regarded as Liu An's great invention; Liu practiced alchemy for panacea creation. Liqi was made out of expectation.

In Example 1, as illustrated in Figure 1, the Chinese text is a local ballad cited in a travel promotion video. In Chinese, the rhyme of the ballad was "an", like "chuan" *(sound in Chinese)*, "an" *(sound in Chinese)*, "bian" *(sound in Chinese)* and "dan" *(sound in Chinese)*. The original translation (translation 1) neglected the rhythm and destroyed the beauty of ballad, which robbed away the charm and interest of video clip. In the enhanced version (translation version 2), translators reconstruct a rhyme "tion" to replace "*an*" *(sound in Chinese)* to seek equivalence in some sense between two languages.

Example 2 (see Figure 1) is a local slogan for investment attraction, highlighting the feature of local economic development mode. In the sentence, "*shu (sound in Chinese)* " is mentioned repeatedly, but in Chinese water means more that it does in English. Consequently, it is unwise to follow the repetition in English. Hence, after discussion, translators decided to use other rhetorical devices for a better replacement. Among the possible options, rhythm might be better than the rest, since it can help spread and memorization of the slogan. The translators put the SL slogan into English like this: travel by waterways, thrive through aquatic business and care for water resources. Such translation could emphasize the importance of water or river in people's life by the Huai River.

5.3 Image Creation

Broadly speaking, cultural translation is quite similar to literature translation, even if it cannot be counted as one. In literature translation, image is quite essential in emotional arousal. To some extent it even surpasses the meaning and becomes the top factor deciding the translator's behavior. In practical cultural translation, group wisdom is needed to conjure up desired images.

Example 3: 潘集自然条件优越，拥有丰富的能源资源、土地资源、人力资源，境内沃野平畴，雨量充沛，物产丰富，民风淳朴，是淮河流域典型的“鱼米之乡”。

Figure 2: Example 3

Translation Version: Besides, with flat and rich land, abundant rainfall, plentiful produces as well as honest and warm-hearted people, the district is a typical land flowing with milk and honey in the Huai River Valley.

Figure 2 shows an excerpt from a publicity documentary. In the text, “*yumizhixiang*” *(sound in Chinese)* is quite Chinese. It indicates a beautiful image of waterside county life in south China. Literally, the place described by the phrase is abundant in fish and rice. Considering the popularization effect of the text, the translator abandoned the original Chinese image and adopted a western one—a land flowing with milk and honey which is quite familiar with western readers and could evoke readers’ longing for a dreamland.

Another case in point is the description translation for Dragon and Tiger Zun (a kind of vessel for drinking) which was evacuated in Funan, a county at the middle reach of the Huai River. The perfect integration of engraving techniques, high relief and three-dimensional relief combined with the delicate and beautiful designs make it a masterpiece of Shang bronze work [23]. In the vessel, below the tiger’s head there is a squatting man holding his arms high above his shoulders and his head is in the jaw of the tiger. In the Chinese description, “tun *(sound in Chinese, meaning* swallow)” is used. Since in the following part, no further details are offered for the image. The translator thus has great autonomy in its interpretation. Traditionally to interpret the image of tiger swallowing man, there are two popular versions. One is the tiger swallowing the slave; the other is the wizard bravely squeezed into the tiger’s mouth to save people. The tiger’s mouth is a pass between life and death. Considering no special preference for either of the version, the translator adopts the second one, hoping to stress the power and good luck of the vessel. Accordingly, he use the phrase “explore” to replace “swallow” so as to create a positive and heroic image.

5.4 Sentence Selection

At the sentence level, the translators’ role is also visible and the collective ideas are also in great demand. The sentence selection has a lot to do with the syntactic structure, focusing on some grammatical, emotional and aesthetic effects.

Example 4: 走千走万，不如淮河两岸。
Example 5: 淮河岸边古楚都，道不尽人文典故。

Figure 3: Example 4&5

Translation Version 4.1: After travelling extensively, one can find that few places in the world can match the area across the Huai River.

Translation Version 4.2: East or West, the Huai River is the best.

Example 4 (see Figure 3) is from a publicity video about the Huai River. It is a proverb almost known to every Chinese. As the first sentence in the opening part, it functioned as a topic sentence. Easy understanding and conciseness should be the cardinal principle for the translation. The original translation (translation version 1) was redundant and complicated because of too much emphasis on loyalty. The improved version (translation version 2) borrowed a well-known proverb in TL culture and gave full play to the welcoming role of the sentence at the start. Besides, technically speaking; the second version also saves a lot of space, making the version correspond to the original Chinese proverb in length when put together as subtitles.

Translation Version for example 5 (see Figure 3): Across the Huai River, the Ancient Chu Kingdom is full of celebrities and stories!

In the SL text, the sentences are from a poem describing the time-honored history and rich cultural heritage of the Huai River Valley. For long, poem translation has remained an unnegotiable challenge for translators. However, the context of the sentences is not literary but regional promotion. According to Katherine Reiss, the corrections here are expressive texts that aim to arouse readers' attention and persuade them to act [24]. Bearing this in mind, after serious discussion, translators select an exclamatory sentence to draw TL readers' attention for the sake of better promotion.

6. Conclusion

Community translation should be encouraged in the international communication of the Huai River culture. Group discussion and collective knowledge could add creativity and spice to the publicity translation of local cultures. In this process, the role of community translators and their internal behavior are worth close attention and intensified efforts. By doing so, the direction of community translation could be identified and strictly followed, and thus the nature of translation could be retained. Meanwhile, a good balance can be achieved between flexibility and loyalty so that the inheritance and development of the culture will not be undermined. The study, by focusing on the internal behavior of the community translators, helps healthy progress and spread of the culture and propels the growth of community translation of the culture.

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