

Analysis on Periodical Variation in Translation of the Same Cultural-Related Term

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Abstract

This paper aims to figure out what impacts the changing translation of certain terminologies as China is steadily raising its international voice in diplomatic activities. Besides, in recent years, many terms have been polished due to the linguistic environment, but no researches have been conducted on this, so the author would like to further his study in order to make up for the research blank and to provide something to be referred by his successors.

Keywords

Variant, Translation, Certain Terminologies, International Voice, Linguistic Environment

1. Introduction

It is far from easy to figure out when on earth the term “Culture” came into being while it did appear very long ago, though the influence it brings to people or the environment they live in, or what we call the society, is remarkable. In the era of globalization, the communication among countries around the world in politics, economy, language, and culture is becoming increasingly close, and the trend of the multicultural interconnectivity and a shared destiny is irreversible. With Chinese culture increasingly known in the world, cross-cultural translation functions more in protecting cultural diversity, promoting cultural exchange and mutual learning, and enhancing national image, as well as in building a community with a shared future for mankind (Fang & Guo, 2020). What’s more, due to differences in geography, customs, and culture among different countries, research on the impact of cultural differences in cross-cultural business negotiation communication on English translation is receiving increasing attention from society (Dong, 2021). In this way, translation for cultural terms has a mi-

lestone meaning in this inter connective era. Yet, due to various factors, terminologies shall be translated in constantly refined ways as the environment they are varies.

Especially when China has achieved a higher position and a bigger voice in international society, term translation has been greatly changed, so when entities are working in the international society, they should use the latest translation to make their standpoints clarified and at the same time, to guarantee the correctness of politics. The author focuses on articulating what on earth will have an impact on the translation of certain terminologies related to culture, politics and economy, and the author will take some as examples to further his viewpoints.

2. Why Term Translation Shall Be Promoted and Researched in the Current Society?

Globalization is the main and inevitable trend in this interrelated world, with each country and region involved in, whose culture, politics, economy and even environment are differentiated. Countries must cooperate with each other in order to seek a better development and create a harmonious international society, where communication and translation has to play its part. In order to make people from different cultures or countries understood when communicating, translation has to be sharpened and polished as well based on various factors. Currently, China is devoting itself to constructing a strong socialist culture in China and bending itself to making its culture much more known in the world.

However, China boasts a five-thousand-year history, in which many culture-related words and phrases are involved, such as “耄耋” or “绿水青山就是金山银山”, which refers to not only one literal meaning but something metaphoric as well. It is those multi-meanings that make term translation count, for either literal meaning or metaphoric ones shall be translated based on different situations. As a consequence, how to translate them needs researching, in order to make the translation politically and culturally proper when communicating with others. This is why some terms have been translated and interpreted in a different way recently.

3. Factors Periodically Influencing the Translation: Taking “高考” as an Example

3.1. C-E Translation: 高考

Beforehand, the term would be translated as “the Entrance Examination to Colleges and Universities”, but now its translation is changed into “Chinese Gaokao”. The change takes place because the international status of China is highly raised and an increasingly more people around the world would like to accept Chinese culture. Consequently, there is no need to use a literal translation to show what “高考” is, and instead, when it comes to Chinese Gaokao, people can instantly know that it is the most important examination for Chinese students to change their life.

Besides, a few more culture-related terms also have their new translation now. For example, the previous “steamed stunned bun” is currently changed into “*baozi*” while Tianjin’s unique breakfast is also directly translated with its pinyin name, *Jianbing guozi*, all of which shows China has its courage and ability to show off its culture to the whole world. What’s more, neither the “steamed stunned bun” nor the previous translation for *Jianbing Guozi* is able to tell the world the name of those things. Why it is important to translate and introduce culture-related terms, to one extent, lies in make the names known to the world.

So, in this way, translators and interpreters are able to let foreigners know how to address these culture-related things and make them accessible to the cultural meaning of things with Chinese characteristics.

3.2. E-C Translation: A Kettle of Fish

A pot of fish or a kettle of fish, literally means a lot of fish gathering in one place. However, because of geographic features, it means a great mess.

Based on the researches of Huang Beibei (2010), this idiom comes from the border areas of Scotland. Every year during the salmon migration season, large groups of salmon swim in groups in the river. At this point, people gathered together to have a picnic by the river, The main dish is a large pot of fresh salmon. After cooking, everyone just grab it with their hands, Strive desperately to eat, The scene is very chaotic, But it’s also lively. Later, people used this phrase to refer to a “messy” situation or scene.

In this way, it is easy to see that geography also has an impact on the translation of terms, especially on those idioms.

3.3. C-E Translation: 开窗

Many years ago, when it comes to “开窗” in Chinese, people will definitely say “open the window”. Even the sentence “Would you mind my opening the window” always appeared on the exam paper as an official expression with certain Chinese characteristics. However, in recent years, the phrase “open the window” is being taken place by a few other phrases like “roll down the widow”, and sometimes people just say “I need some air” to express why they would like to open the window.

The change happens not because of culture or geography, but because of life change. With the 1st and 2nd Industry Revolution, vehicles stepped into people’s life and windows on the cars were not pushed to be opened, but rolled down. As the time advances, windows of houses are being refined as well. Screen windows are used everywhere and nowadays, most screen windows are rolled up and down, so it is less proper to say “open the window” anymore.

Translation and interpreting are the art of language, and art comes from life. Definitely, translation shall be done under certain code of conduct, but life can have a huge impact on it as well. When life changes, that will change people’s discourse or colloquial languages and subsequently influence written language,

which means a language pattern comes into being.

4. Conclusion

Translation and interpreting, as the bridge between speakers and the audience, have to be improved constantly, so as to invariably make the speakers understood clearly. Variation of term translations not only shows the improvement of translation proficiency of a country, but also shows the attitude of a country in diplomatic activities. What's more, as geographic change happens, people will change their way of life, code of conduct or even way of speech, and all these above will have an influence on how terms are translated and interpreted. Based on the author's research and observation, the change and variation of translation and interpreting are influenced not only by politics, but by geopolitics, geography, economy or religion as well, and lifestyles, which advance people's colloquial language, will play an indispensable part. Research on translation is supposed to be gradually refined based on those relevant factors to pace up with the development of the time. Studying the translation change is quite complicated, for it involves in various aspects, and only when those factors are comprehensively considered can the translation be systematically and deeply looked into. The author hopes to provide a reference to the successors who also devote themselves to researching this question.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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