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***ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПЕРЕВОДА НАЗВАНИЙ КНИГ С КИТАЙСКОГО
ЯЗЫКА НА АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК***

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Аннотация: Основное внимание в работе автор акцентирует на переводе определенных названий книг с китайского языка на английский язык. Цель статьи – проследить особенности китайских книг, а также продемонстрировать переводческие приемы с языка источника на язык перевода.

Ключевые слова: название книги, культурные особенности, языковые особенности, методы перевода.

***PECULARITIES OF BOOK TITLE TRANSLATION FROM CHINESE INTO
ENGLISH***

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Abstract: This paper mainly discusses the selected literature book title translation from Chinese to English. The objectives of the article is to talk about the features of Chinese literature books, furthermore it is to demonstrate the translation techniques from their source language to the target language.

Keywords: literature book title, cultural features, linguistic features, translation

techniques.

A book is a set of sheets of paper, parchment, or similar materials that are fastened together to hinge at one side. A single sheet within a book is a leaf, and each side of a leaf is a page. Writing or images can be printed or drawn on a book's pages. An electronic image that is formatted to resemble a book on a computer screen, smart phone or e-reader device is known as an electronic book or e-book.

The term "books" may also refer to a body of works of literature, or a main division of literature (e.g., children's literature). In library and information science, a book is called a monograph, to distinguish it from serial periodicals such as magazines, journals, or newspapers. In novels and sometimes other types of books (for example, biographies), a book may be divided into several large sections, also called books (Book 1, Book 2, Book 3, and so on).

In the background of globalization of economic and culture, China plays a more and more important role all around the world. It's essential to take part in the globalization actively and positively. As we all know, book is a kind of significant medium in communicating culture among different countries, different districts and different ethnics. Furthermore, the titles of books are the cores of the essence of books, when we first see a book, we must be attracted by the names of the books, and we also get to know what the books talk about from their titles. A good title sometimes can catch readers' eyes and expresses the main ideas of the books. So a good title may not only includes a few words but contains so much information reflect the connotation of its main idea.

In the development of culture, translation is a necessary process of communication. We must let foreigners know what our culture is, so that translating books is a very important method to achieve it. Particularly I want to talk about the translation of the title of a book which plays an important role in cultural communication. A good title is the soul of the book. When we translate names of books into other languages, we must know how to do it in an appropriate and efficient way. We must focus on how to remain the peculiars of Chinese as

well as to make foreigners grasp the cultural connotation from different views of culture and value.

There are a grand large number of Chinese books due to more than five thousand years of history and highly developed selected classical culture. In ancient China, the tremendous masterpieces includes: The book of changes, The book of poetry, The book of history, The doctrine of the mean, The commentary of Zhuo, Records of the history, The discourses and sayings of Confucius, Book of Han, The songs of the south, and so on. They were written from the Xia dynasty to the Spring and Autumn period and the warring states period (21st century BC—221 BC) which are considered to be the first batch of treasure in literature. The books above involved almost all fields in a civilized social: poetry, science, language, music, history, tactics, religions, ethics, philology, and pedagogy, and so on, which are the elements of humanity. During the beginning of Qin dynasty to the late Qing dynasty(221 BC—1912 AD), the books to be analyzed are: A record of enjoying tea inside the Half pavilion, A Mr. Shu's cats, Bamboo, The story of an ink stick maker, Watching snow at the mid-lake pavilion, Yan Ziling's fishing terrace, The cost of big words, A man who talks big, The west lake market, Travel to Manjing, Xiang Ji study, Tea, Preface to strange tales in make-do studio, ZiQiao's foul heart, Musician Qiao's musical instrument, A scene of the moon in the snow, Liu Jingting as a storytell, Hairui's possession and property, The story of three sichuan merchants, A visit to the pearl spring, Ziyu's far sightedness, A lesson learned from a game of Weiqi, The travels of Lao Ts'an, The golden lotus/Gold bottle plum, A new account of the tales of the world, Snow in midsummer, 20 years witness strange present situation. Especially the four great classical novels: Water margin/all men are brothers/Outlaws of the marsh, A dream in red mansions/Red chamber, Journey to the west/Pilgrimage to the west, Romance of the three kingdoms. They stand for the most sophisticated, profound, mature classical literatures in China. They influenced moral values and ideology of people in that period of time deeply and are of high levels of artistry in literature that reflected the daily life and particulars of feudal society in China. And the third part

of the period is the modern time (1921 AD—) , I chose The tragedy of Kong Yiji, The true story of Ah Q, The sun shines on the Sanggan River, The storm, Frog, Punishment of sandalwood/Sandalwood death, Deserted/The abandoned castle, The temptation of Gangdisi, One man's Bible, Soul mountain, Being alive, Cultural perplexity in agonized travel, The legend of the condor heroes, Auntie Duohe, Half seawater, half flame, If you are the one, Triple door, Finally I love you, The epic of a woman, Once upon a time/To the sky kingdom, Legend of Lu Xiaofeng, Big breasts and wide hips, Crimson saber/Sword stained with royal blood, A step into the past, and Never-flowers in never-dream to analyze. They represent the modern time's literature and some of them won many international literature awards, such as the Frog won the Nobel Prize in 2012 and the Mao Dun literary prize; *Soul Mountain* won the Nobel Prize in literature in 2000; the Sun shines on the Sanggan River won the Stalin prize for literature and so on.

A book title sums up what will be going on in the book, thus helping thereaders to get its general idea easily. Furthermore it may give hints to such clues as its hero or heroin, theme, background, time, place, a thread of the film and so on.

Book title is the soul of the book, an epitome of civilization, which has its own stylistic, linguistic and cultural features. Whenever readers first notice a book, the cover of this book catches their attention and then they would take a look at the name of the book, brevity and concise are very important factors to audiences, nevertheless innovation should also be taken into account. For the books I chose are all in the field of Literature, their merits is worth of a faithful, expressive and elegant translation. A book title generally implies the plot, background, view, theme, hero and thread of the book. Thus readers can get a general idea from the name of a book.

A good title always tries to realize fullness. But fullness has nothing to do with wordiness, which means what the title should achieve is the balance between fullness and brevity instead of either single factor. Besides its lexical features, as

the title also functions as a certain form of language, also need weighing as to better serve the book title translation. Besides concise, appealing and revelation are also important factors in translation of book names.

As is known to all, language does not exist independently and is closely related to culture. Language has a cultural, not a biologically inherited function.

The origin of many linguistic expressions can be found in its culture. The intimate relationship between language and culture is also conspicuously presented in book titles. Chinese culture, especially ancient Chinese culture was influenced deeply by Confucius so that the elegance and refinement are significant characters. Modesty, nobility and prudent are championed by almost all the literati poet or Chinese scholars, nevertheless the Taoist scholar chased a bare, free and simple lifestyle so that their literature mostly depicts about the nature and their expectations of pastoralism. They gave expression to the natural landscapes. Please look at the following examples:

《游珍珠泉记》—A visit to the pearl spring

《记雪月之观》—A scene of the moon in the snow

《湖心亭看雪》—Watching snow at the mid-lake pavilion

《半幅亭试茗记》—A record of enjoying tea inside the Half pavilion

These titles are all about returning to nature and have a wonderful trip. We will be very clear when we see these titles; these literature works must have a connection with the description of natural scenes and some feelings and thoughts of authors.

Briffa&Caruana stated that titles usually express content in its most condensed and simplified form, in which language is generally connotational rather than denotational mainly because of the metonymic nature of titles. Title translation allows a certain level of creativity so that at times it takes the form of an artistic exchange. In another situation, the geographical names, person names or some specific nouns should be translated by transliteration or transcription method.

Or what Roman Jakobson calls “creative transposition”. The title of a novel is

associated with the novel's content and thus it becomes part of the text. In other words, the title derives its identity from the context and translation must take this into account. Titles would be more complicated especially when complying with the underlying meanings. In contrast to this level of title, we can mention a jumping-off point title as when a poet uses a line or phrase from the poem itself to name it. In translation, these functions are effective and admirable but at the same time the translated title must maintain loyalty to the best with the original work. Any change may destroy the meaning intended by the author. Therefore, translators must be very proficient and adept in both the source languages but also the target languages.

Talking of translation methods, Newmark ever introduced a series of methods, namely, word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation. Among the eight ones mentioned above, the first four give priority to source language emphasis while the last four to target language emphasis. In literal translation, the source language grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest target language equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context. While faithful translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the target language grammatical structures. Though there is obvious difference between literal translation and faithful translation, in some cases the effect of these two methods turns to be almost the same. For example, the translation of "Being alive" into "活着" (Huozhe) may agree with not only the literal translation but also the faithful one. There is no one single translation technique that can solve all the problems of translation. This is especially true with film title translation. The following part introduces various translation techniques and methods applied in film title translation with rich examples.

Transliteration means to copy the letters of the source language by the target language letters of another system. In book name translation, it is characterized by phonetic correspondence, that is, to describe the Chinese characters through the

corresponding English syllables carrying similar sounds. Transliteration is usually used in the translation of proper names, names of persons and places. Although this approach is not widely used in book title translation, it is necessary to convey Chinese specialties in vocal sound. The Skopos theory which is the core of German Functionalist theory, puts emphasis on the importance of the goal of the translation—the potential readers. It can guide translation practice. Such cases are:

《史记》 (records of the history) is translated as *Shihchi*

《离骚》 (tales of woe) is translated as *Lisao*

《孔乙己》 (Kong Yiji) is translated into *The tragedy of Kong Yiji*

Transliteration has its own advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, it keeps the rhythm and form of the original title and attracts the audience's attention by its strong foreign flavor. The foreignness may arouse the audience's curiosity to explore what is exotic and unknown to them. On the other hand, transliteration is to write the Chinese characters in foreign words in carrying similar sounds, which may make no much sense to the audience since the title gives little information or hint about the book to the reader but an unfamiliar name. In translating the titles named after a certain character or place, transliteration is usually the first choice. But it doesn't necessarily mean that transliteration can be applied in all such situations. Owing to certain characters or places are very difficult for target readers to understand without an interlinear note to explain it. And therefore the adoption of transliteration may bring some feeling of strangeness, which is certainly contrary to our expectation. Such as 《废都》 is the name of a place, but the translator adopted the abandoned castle or Deserted as the English title instead of *Feidu* according to the Pinyin. From the perspective of the Skopes theory, the author argued that the goal of translating book titles of Chinese books into English and Russian was to communicate the unique Chinese culture to the western readers. In the global cultural context and with the popularity of the Chinese language and the Chinese culture, the translator should mainly adopt the strategy of transliteration with interlinear notes.

Free translation is the reproduction of the source form and content in a loose way. This concept means adding extra elements of information or losing some essential ones. Recently translation theorists have begun to relate free translation to communicative translation, depending on the purpose of the translation. From P. Newmark, free translation produces a similar effect on the target text to the receptors of the original text, which is more understandable than transliteration. And there are some examples given below:

《尊卢沙》—*A man who talks big*

In this case, the original name is only about a person's name, probably the hero's name, whereas after it was translated into English, the title adds some information to make the novel much more understandable. It is an act of the person to complement the story which reflects the plot of the novel.

Sometimes this transformation is named as explicitation, which means rewording the meaning into another structure so that the receptor will have a better understanding of the phrase. This transformation is often accompanied by the extension of the structure, the addition of new elements: “钓台” (fishing terrace) is translated as *Yan Ziling's fishing terrace*. While translating the title, the translator added the hero's name to replenish it further.

《大言》 (big words) is transformed into “the cost of big words”, the supplement denoted the emotion of the book, which contains the guilty and could leave readers space to imagine what the story is about. Mostly this kind of title is sophisticated and deep provoked.

Reduction is about giving up redundant and communicatively irrelevant words: “项脊轩志” (the tale of Xiangji study) is translated into “Xiangji study”. The reduction is “the tale”, which means a kind of narrative or emotional literary form in ancient China. In this case the translator omitted the noun to simplify the title.

“西湖香氏” (The west lake license market) should be translated in “The west lake market”. The translator omitted “香” (license) due to the word license

narrowing the range of meaning, because here the market mentioned not only sells license.

“香茗”(the fragrant tea) was been translated into “Tea”. The book name omitted the adjective. In ancient China, we used “香茗” (the fragrant tea), but nowadays we use tea instead of it. So that Tea is more reasonable.

Metonymical translation is the transference of meaning and structure based on the contiguity of forms and meaning of the source and target languages. It could be further confirmed by the example given below:

《弈论》—*A lesson learned from a game of Weiqi*. The Chinese title is of classical Chinese—a condensed phrase, and it contained the noun “Weiqi” (a traditional ancient Chinese chess) and the verb “discuss” in Chinese characters, whereas in English version, it was translated into a phrase to further explain it. This causes grammar restructuring of the book name. To achieve the fullness of the title, the name transferred the original simple construction to a complex sentence with necessary information.

In dealing with book name translation, we should be convinced that the work which should be done is to translate the titles rather than to re-entitle the books. That is to say, the principle to be applied in the first place is nothing but to keep being faithful to the original one as well as understandable to the target readers. There is no denying that various differences exist between the Chinese language and the English language in terms of either language or culture, as are mentioned above. But there are still quite a lot of units that are understood in almost the same way between the two languages. Literal translation is the translation that reproduces communicatively irrelevant elements of the source text; this usually happens when the translator copies the source language form on this or that level of the language. Literal translation is sometimes referred to as formal, or grammar translation, though it is not the same. However it is often associated with a rather negative evaluation of the translation. But there are still much equality between Chinese and English. Such as: “亭” in Chinese equals to pavillion in English; “茶” in

Chinese is the same thing as “tea” in English and so on.

Sometimes literal translation on this or that level is a must. The translators cannot do without it when rendering proper and geographical names, person names and some borrowings. For example:

《满井游记》 was translated into Travel to Manjing, in which “Manjing” is the geographical name of the well; 《一个人的圣经》 was translated as One man's Bible ; etc.

When it comes to the selection between a literal form and its analog, translators would prefer to choose the form clearer and more understandable for the receptors, especially in literature, nevertheless in titles or headings. Here are some cases to demonstrate: 《刚峰宦囊》 “Hairui's possession and property” is a classical literature that each character of it means too much. It can not be translated literally due to the botchy and obscure of its characters. The translator transformed the name of the hero “刚峰” “Gangfeng” that is unfamiliar to readers into “海瑞” (Hairui) which is much acceptable to make it clearer. Another case is 《寻秦记》 “A step into the past” which is a fantasy literature about time-travel to the Qin dynasty. The translator used “the past” to substitute the “Qin Dynasty”, for those people who are not familiar with the Chinese history to understand it better.

Metaphorical transformations are based on transferring the meaning due to the similarity of notions especially when there is no equal emotion of the target language that is expressed in the source language. For example, 《大言》 means “big words” in English, and they are almost equally in expressing bragging and boast.

Another case is 《窦娥冤》 “Snow in midsummer”. “窦娥” (Dou'e) is the heroin's name; “冤” means “injustice”. The English version of this title is transformed metaphorically into “Snow in midsummer”, as it is known to us that snow in summer means something bad happens, and there is a situation in the script: after the heroin “窦娥” (Dou'e) was convicted to die by the officer, because

“□娥” (Dou'e) was framed by the real criminal, so the sky began to fall snow whereas it was in midsummer. Here the snow in midsummer means injustice and grieve.

Grammar transformations are morphological or syntactical changes in translated units. “Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” [8, 12]. A translator has to take several elements into account when translating any type of text. The primary aim should be to reproduce the message, which can require many grammatical adjustments as well as lexical ones. Nida and Taber stress the importance of using the closest equivalent as well as using a natural equivalent, which means that the translator should not be seen. They add that the “best translation does not sound like a translation” [8, 12]. According to Nida and Taber, style is also an important factor although it is secondary to content. Here I want to analyze the subdivided into the following types:

There are so many differences in grammar among China, America and Russia. In Chinese grammar system, we don't use “of” to connect two belongings of stuff, and we usually use a highly condensed Chinese character in title to makes it simple and brief. While in Russian grammar the concept of “of” is substituted by the genitive case, conveying the same function of it. For example, 《史记》, “史” is the abbreviation of “历史” which means “historian”; “记” is the abbreviation of “record”. If we use the English grammar to express it, it should be “史的记”, (“的” could be the equivalence of “of” in Chinese character), whereas in Chinese regular system of grammar, it betrayed Chinese idiomatic grammar.

Usually the situation of this transformation is out of the reason that the order between the Chinese characters and the English words is exactly opposite. There I want to choose 《红楼梦》 “A dream in red mansions” as a case to analyze. “红” means red, “楼” means mansion, and “梦” is dream in Chinese character. If we obey the same word order of Chinese characters, the transformation should be “red

mansion dream”, but it is not correctly translated in the idiomatic English grammar system.

When book titles translated from the source language to the target language, there are a number of multiple factors to restrict. There are two extremes; the title should be totally loyal to the author, or just translated freely to cater to readers. Obviously there should find a way to compromise. The ideal translation should be loyal to the author as well as consider about how readers feel and understand when they read the book. Hence when we choose different approaches to translated book titles, we must make the most advantage to find the perfect adaptive one as much as possible.

The features of book titles are concise, appealing and be loyal to the original version. What’s more, as the translated book faces new audience speaking a different type of language and enjoying a different kind of culture, it is necessary for the translator to put into account the audience’s psychological condition in translating films titles of various topics, which helps to keep the title attractive, persuasive and durable in the audience’s mind. In the same time, there are some particulars in Chinese culture that is identical and unique, so that there is no equivalence in literal translation among the source language and the target languages, in this case, the translator maintain the transliteration of Chinese culture by Pinyin as well as a simplified specification to explain the original title. Such as “Shang Shu: the book of history.”

With the promotion of cross-cultural communication, book importing and exporting will become more and more prosperous. The task of book title translation will at the same time become more and more important.

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