

A Study on the Cross-Cultural Communication Attributes Of Translation

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ABSTRACT

Human culture is rich and colorful, as well as its communication activities and contents. Especially after entering the human society into the information age, the field of human communication activities has been further expanded, revealing that the content of communication has different nature and characteristics. Communication theory has been widely used in social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological activities. It shows the application and promotion of modern communication research in various fields of social life. Cross-cultural communication is a phenomenon in which various cultural resources and cultural information in human societies of different cultures change, interact, and are shared in time and space. Based on the relationship between culture and communication, cross-cultural communication research mainly analyses the changes of heterogeneous culture in the process of communication and the impact of cultural changes on communication, discussing the impact and influence mode of communication on human cultural consciousness, cultural behaviour and cultural customs.

Key words: Language integration; Language translation; Intercultural communication; Cultural cultivation

To cite this article: Hui, W., Lah, S. C. (2022). A Study on the Cross-Cultural Communication Attributes of Translation. *International Journal of Language, Literacy and Translation* 5(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.36777/ijollt2022.5.1.047>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.36777/ijollt2022.5.1.047>

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Received: 12 December 2021

Accepted: 7 February 2022

Published Online: 30 April 2022

CONTRIBUTION/ ORIGINALITY:

For nearly two decades, translation has appeared as a tendency, ranging from translation studies from language and literature to the cross-cultural communication way of research. It is argued that translation process is a means of cross-cultural communication behaviour, namely translation not only involves the discourse transformation between two languages, but also it is behind the two different languages having different connotations of blending the two cultures. This paper expounds the role of "cross-cultural communication" in cultural communication, and points out that a full attention is needed to devote to the advantages and functions of the translation methods, removing the obstacles caused by lack of understanding and even misunderstanding, and making the translation act as an effective medium of cultural communication.

INTRODUCTION

As an intermediary of cross-cultural communication, translation has the dual nature of culture and communication. Therefore, it can be said that the process of translation is a dialogue between one culture to another, and a process of the dissemination of the source culture in the target culture. Translation itself is not only a culture, but also communication behaviour and a communication process. It is a cross-cultural communication behaviour and process during the course of interlingual communication. To study translation from the perspective of cross-cultural communication, the relevant theories of cross-cultural communication can be applied to provide a strong theoretical basis for translation research. Under the guidance of cross-cultural communication theory, the research on all links and factors in the process of translation is more systematic and scientific. This also shows that the broad theoretical research system of cross-cultural communication could endow translation research with a certain theoretical model and beneficial nutrients.

Both functional language school and German Skopos Theory of translation function believe that translation behaviour must occur in a specific social and cultural environment. They study language and translation from the perspective of social function, regarding translation as a cross-language and cross-cultural communicative communication behaviour, while highlighting that the social function of translation is mainly communication. In fact, the translation behaviour of interpersonal communication accounts for only a small part of all translation endeavors, most of them being point-to-point communication behaviours, which necessitates considering and studying the essential attributes and social functions of translation from the perspective of cross-cultural communication.

RECOGNITION OF THE CONCEPT AND ESSENCE OF TRANSLATION

Essence refers to the fundamental attributes inherent in things and determining the nature, appearance and development of things. Everything in the world has many properties, such as shape, color, smell and so on. In addition to many properties, a thing also has various relationships with other things, such as up and down, size, left and right, and so on. In formal logic, the nature and relationship of things are collectively referred to as the attributes of things. Everything in this world tends to have many attributes. Among the many attributes of things, some attributes are unique to one or a kind of things, which can determine the essence of the thing and distinguish it from other things. The basic attribute of such things is the essential attribute of things, which is actually the stipulation of the essence of things. People's understanding of the essence of translation is mainly reflected in the various definitions offered for translation. In fact, the essence of translation is to answer what kind of activity translation is and what is its particularity compared with other activities.

Finally, translation is one of the highest faculty human practical activities, the essential feature of which is creation. The creative feature of translation is mainly reflected in the highly subjective and complex processes such as the translator's subjective abstract thinking, imaginative thinking and emotional participation. As a practical activity, creativity involves many aspects such as subject (translator) and object (text, original author and reader).

One of the fundamental questions to be answered in translation studies is: what is translation? The process of answering this question is actually the process of conceptualising the translation process or phenomenon, and the result of such conceptualisation is the definition expressed by language. In the past half century, translation theorists have never stopped trying to define translation, either out of the objective needs of carrying out research, or out of the subjective desire to reveal the essential attributes of translation, or out of the discipline requirements of determining the research object. Translation definitions could be generally found in various translation works. There are definitely different opinions on these definitions of translation, while showing various aspects of translation activities from different angles, and enriching and deepening our understanding of translation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE EVOLUTION OF TRANSLATION CONCEPTS

In the structural linguistics paradigm, it is generally believed that only the text equivalent to the original text can be called translation. Translation has been typically regarded as the transformation process between two languages. A translator is not supposed to have personal subjective evaluations and judgments on the original text. The highest ideal of the translator is to translate the original text into the target language faithfully and completely. From Catford (1965) to Nida(1995), and then to the definitions and descriptions of 'translation' offered in the Chinese translation dictionaries, they all ignore other purposes of translation,

and consider faithful conveying of the author's original meaning as the primary and ultimate purpose of translation. Therefore, translation research has always been focused in language analysis and text comparison. For example, the concept of translation first introduced into China was put forward by Fedorov: "translation is the faithful and comprehensive expression of things expressed in another language by means of one language" (the faithfulness and comprehensiveness of communication is where translation is different from reporting, brief description and various rewriting)" (Cai Yi, 1995). Catford (1965) posited that translation occurs when "the discourse material of one language (the target language) is replaced by the equivalent discourse material in another language (the source language)". This definition seems to only regard translation as a form with two states of existence; one is the source language and the other is the target language, without discussing the translation subject and translation process, failing to reflect the essence of translation activities. From Nida's point of view, "translation refers to reproducing the information of the source language in the target language first semantically and then stylistically with the most appropriate and natural equivalent." (Nida & Taber, 2004). In fact, these definitions have no essential differences. They all refer to unfaithful, incomplete and unequal translation (such as 'excerpt', 'compilation', etc.) excluded from translation. Here, translation is only a meaning conversion activity between languages, but it does not reveal the essence of translation activities and does not reflect the fundamental differences between translation and other activities. Later, Fedorov revised the definition of translation and held that "translation is the reproduction of the speech products of one language (source language) in another language (target language). According to Cai Yi (1995) and Tan (1991) "translation is a kind of language creation activity". This definition reflects the changes in the theorists' views on translation. There are no words such as 'faithfulness' and 'comprehensiveness' here, and it has been translated into "a kind of language creation activity". Wilss (1995) has taken a step further than the above three in his understanding of the essence of translation. He believes "Translation is the process of transforming the source language discourse into the target language discourse as equivalent as possible". In addition, Bell described in detail the three meanings of the word translation in his book *Translation and Translating*: 1) translation refers to the translation process; 2) translation refers to the product of the translation process; 3) translation is an abstract concept, including both "process" and "translation" "Product" (Wang, 1997). The word 'translation' has so many 'signifiers'. When discussing the essence of translation, if the 'signifier' is not limited first, it is difficult to say what the essence of translation is. In fact, translation should not only refer to translation behaviour, but also involve translation process. Only after such limitation can the debate on the essence of translation be meaningful (Yang & Zhang, 2001).

Toury (1980) abandoned the definition paradigm based on a priori speculation, fully respecting the translation practice and criteria for judging translation in different historical periods and cultural backgrounds, and including all the language activities regarded as translation by the target language system into the scope of translation. In this way, the object of translation research has expanded unprecedentedly, not only mistranslation and unequal translation, but also translation (translation through an intermediary language) and pseudo translation (translation without original works) can be the research objects. Toury puts forward his widely quoted definition of translation for the purpose of serving the theoretical

construction of descriptive Translatology: for whatever reason, any translated text in the form of translation or regarded as translation in the target language system is translation. In this way, the concept of translation has been expanded, so that the long-neglected translation phenomenon has its due research status. Toury's definition of translation does not completely limit the research object, taking full account of the nationality, regionality and historicity of translation activities, and truthfully reflects the objective existence of translation. Further, it does not limit the connotation of the concept, nor its extension. It is broad and inclusive, and can cover almost all translation phenomena. Therefore, accepting and adopting Toury's definition of translation can broaden the field of translation research.

THE ESSENCE OF TRANSLATION

The long-standing translation activities in China and other countries all over the world show that conveying the author's original intention is only one of the many purposes of translation. If the nature of translation is biasedly understood, some important facts, such as the function of translation activities in the main culture will inevitably be ignored. Functionalist translation theory studies in the category of cross-cultural communication hold that translation is a purposeful cross-cultural interaction. For example, Zhong proposed the concept of 'translation behaviour', defines translation behaviour as "a complex behaviour designed to realise the cross-cultural and cross-language transformation of information" (Zhong & Zhong, 1999).

As we all know, any language is not simply a combination of words, words and sentences, but the deposition of the history, culture, and even psychological feelings of the people who use the language. The process of information transmission from one language to another cannot be just a mechanical transformation between words and sentences, but a kind of cultural transfer and cultural transformation. Culture can be national, regional and contemporary. Culture also needs to be spread and developed - not only within the same culture, but also between heterogeneous cultures. Cultures need communication to thrive, and communication is inseparable from translation. Therefore, it can be seen that the essence of translation is cross-cultural communication, that is, cross-cultural communication is the origin of translation, and translation is the product and means of cross-cultural communication, which is inseparable from the associated culture. It is more accurate to regard translation as a cross-cultural communication or communication activity than a cross-language transformation activity. It can be said with great certainty that translation itself is a kind of culture, which is a cross-cultural communication behaviour that expresses the information transmitted in one language in another language.

ANALYSIS ON THE ATTRIBUTES AND FACTORS OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION OF TRANSLATION

In the 21st century of globalisation, cross-cultural communication has penetrated into all aspects of human life and affects our way of thinking and behaviour from different angles. American scholar Huntington (2002) believes that in today's era, cultural differences exist

objectively and will be the main cause of world conflicts in the future. To make the world full of love, understanding and peace, it is very important to ensure smooth cross-cultural communication. However, in cross-cultural communication activities, most people achieve the purpose of communication through text (translation). Translation and writing constitute the basic form of our cross-cultural communication. Therefore, combining cross-cultural communication with translation research can undoubtedly open up new research directions and enrich the connotation of translation research.

According to Zhang (2003) there are eight elements involved in cross-cultural communication, namely disseminator, communication information, communication media, information audience, communication effect, communication purpose, communication environment and communication way. As the main way of cross-cultural communication, the communication process of translation must conform to the basic characteristics and attributes of cross-cultural communication. We might as well analyse the elements of translation activities from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. That means the process of cross-cultural information communication involves eight elements: who spreads, what spreads, through which channel medium, in which way, to whom, for what purpose, and in what situation and with what effects. The relationship between these eight elements is interrelated and restrictive, which together constitute an organic whole in the process of cross-cultural communication. We will also study translation activities and their dynamic characteristics from these aspects, that is, the translation subject, translation content, translation channels, translation methods, translation audience, translation purpose, translation context and translation effect, and reflect the function of translation through this organic whole.

These elements are consistent with and closely related to cross-cultural communication, which just shows the essence and attributes of cross-cultural communication in translation. In fact, cross-cultural communication is inseparable from translation, and translation is cross-cultural communication.

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION FUNCTION OF TRANSLATION

The communication between people and cultures and are inseparable from language. Language makes the world, communication expands the world, but translation communicates the world. As a social practice, translation is not only cross-linguistic, cross-cultural, but also communicable. In the sense of cross-cultural communication, translation is a bridge, a link, an adhesive and a tool catalyst that transmits ideas, enrich language, develop intelligence, broaden horizons, and draw beneficial elements from other languages and cultures, so as to change a culture, develop a society and promote historical evolution. Only through translation can different cultures of human societies be pushed to a higher level and development stage.

TRANSLATION IS A BRIDGE OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

As we all know, translation is the first step for the human society to communicate and

understand each other. Whether in the east or the west, a history of translation is a vivid history of cross-cultural communication and development of human society. With the accelerating pace of global economic integration, the exchanges in the fields of science, technology, economy and culture among countries are becoming more and more expanded all over the world. There is an increasing need for translation, and the importance of translation has become prominent. In addition, the more human society develops, the more it reflects a spirit of openness and communication, and the less it can stand still. If human society seeks to get out of the closed world, it must first contact with the outside world in order to establish an exchange relationship and move towards the goal of mutual understanding and common development. Since human beings have languages, cultures, and customs in order to transmit information and exchange culture, it seems that not much has been achieved by translation. Translation is just like a bridge connecting two different cultures and it plays a vital and essential role in the communication between different cultures. The famous poet Goethe has always called for breaking national boundaries and actively carrying out exchanges between different national cultures. In his view, translation plays a "vital role" in human cultural communication - not only in communication and reference, but also in creation (Xu & Murray, 2009). Of course, in reality, Goethe became a well-known figure, and the flower of his literary life has spread all over the world whose strength mainly depends on the bridge of translation.

CULTURAL TRANSLATION PRODUCES TRANSLATION CULTURE

Culture is a social experience and social acquisition which can only be completed in the actual communication of social life. Culture is also a historical tradition, which is the result of passing on from one generation to another generation and continuous continuation. Culture helps one to have knowledge of the past, understand the present and the future, hence promoting the orderly development of society. Therefore, culture is dynamic and in constant communication, it is diverse. The communication is not one-way and closed, but multi-dimensional and crossed. A national language reflects the diverse cultural forms of the nation, so the dissemination of cultural information is not only the introduction of material and cultural forms, but also the mutual contact, understanding, selection and absorption of spiritual and cultural aspects such as values, thinking patterns, social psychology and emotional communication. At the same time, it also involves the complex correlation and deep-seated transformation and variation at various cultural levels. In the communication of foreign cultures, culture is the content of translation communication, and translation communication is the wing of culture. Heterogeneous cultures spread, blend and continue through translation.

The developmental history of human society is a history of translation in which various cultures continue to integrate with each other. Diverse cultures have created a colorful real world, while translation has opened up the division between different cultural societies, formed the exchange and interaction between one cultural information and another cultural information, and promoted the common development of world culture and creation of a shared human civilisation. The transmission of cultural information across cultural barriers is a unique activity of the human society, which needs the help of symbols for ideological

exchange and cultural communication (Lei & Xu, 2006). As an intermediary of cross-cultural communication, translation participates in the decoding and coding of cultural symbols, so it has the dual nature of culture and communication. The process of translation itself is not only a cultural act, but also a communication activity. It is the dissemination of cross-cultural information in the process of interlingual communication. On one hand, it is restricted by the translator's own knowledge, experience, world outlook, values and other factors. Inversely, it is restricted by its social and cultural environment, which in turn reflects the characteristics of national culture.

The result of cultural translation is production of a translation culture. In short, the so-called "cultural translation" is like "literary translation". Similar to the concepts of "learning translation" or "cultural creation", it refers to a kind of cultural communication behaviour. On the other hand, it refers to the activity of cultural translation, which is a dynamic process of translating foreign cultures. The so-called "translation culture" is the result of "cultural translation". It could also be understood from two aspects: first, it refers to the culture generated in the process of studying translation theory and practice, including a series of contents related to translation research, such as translation standards, translation methods and translation criticism. Second, it is understood from the sense of cross-cultural communication, which refers to the source language culture or foreign culture imported through translation, as well as the culture produced by the integration of the source language culture with the target language culture, that is, "the third culture" or "hybrid culture". This process is from input to integration and then to development, from simple to complex, from primary to advanced, from monism to duality and even pluralism. In fact, the process from cultural translation to translation culture is the realisation of translation function from the beginning of translation to the effect of translation from the perspective of cross-cultural communication.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FUNCTIONS OF TRANSLATION COMMUNICATION

The function of translation is mainly reflected in the social and cultural levels. Social change and cultural development are often related to vigorous translation activities. Translation can lead to "subversion" of specific cultures and even social systems, and can also promote the evolution of different civilisations. The Greek literary translation of ancient Rome led to the birth of Latin literature. The spread of Western learning to the East and large-scale translation activities during the May 4th Movement promoted the formation and development of modern vernacular, and then promoted the rapid development of Chinese society and history. These are, undoubtedly, the best evidence of social and cultural functions of translation.

In the era of globalisation, the rise of information communication and mass media makes globalisation and cultural globalisation join together. Translation is undoubtedly a cross-cultural information communication, hence a necessary tool and channel for cross-cultural information communication. Therefore, translation research in the global context must eliminate the constraints of the narrow language level and put in a cross-cultural context of cultural globalisation. Moreover, the study of translation itself is also a cross-cultural problem, especially involving multi-cultural interaction and comparative research. The rise and fall of translation studies is undoubtedly closely related to the status of cultural studies. If

cross-cultural studies are recognised as a new interdisciplinary research field, then translation studies characterised by language reporting and cultural interpretation should also become an independent branch of humanities and social sciences. In the context of cross-cultural communication research, the study of translation has naturally become a cross-cultural phenomenon and activity. Since translation has always been an important means of cross-cultural communication and cultural interpretation, its function could not be replaced by any artificial intelligence in the process of human social, historical and cultural development.

TRANSLATION COMMUNICATION PROMOTES CULTURAL INTEGRATION

Translation communication has a mechanism of integrating heterogeneous cultures. When translation is referred to as integrated, it means that it constitutes culture. The elements or characteristics of culture are not a random patchwork of various components, but adapt to each other or run in symbiosis in most cases (Ember, 1988). The exchange and dissemination of human culture is the key factor to promote cultural integration and generate new cultural structures and cultural models. The history of human development can be said to be the history of continuous integration of different cultures through translation (Zhuang, 2003). In text translation, the result of cultural information integration is to enrich the translation with the temperament, image or artistic conception of other cultures. In the process of integration, cultural information is carried such as language, scene, event, atmosphere, and other contextual components are fully understood, identified and reorganised.

This act requires the translator to have sensitive cross-cultural awareness and cultural information sensing ability, so that the translation effect could be fully reflected. On the other hand, in the communication process of the target language social environment, translation culture also contacts with the target language social and cultural factors, achieves integration through collision, conflict or blending, and finally produces new cultural factors and features. Generally speaking, cultural integration through translation is the compatibility and reorganisation of different cultures. It is a process in which heterogeneous cultures absorb, borrow, identify and tend to integrate with each other (Sun, 2008).

TRANSLATION COMMUNICATION PROMOTES CULTURAL PROLIFERATION

The so-called cultural proliferation is a kind of "expansion" or amplification of culture in quality and quantity, and it is a kind of cultural reproduction. Innovation is a phenomenon that the original value or meaning of a culture generates a new value and meaning in the process of communication. A closed, conservative and backward culture, a culture that lacks innovation will not proliferate and regenerate. This culture will be eliminated with the development of history. Translation introduces the cultures of other nations and promotes their own culture, so as to promote the prosperity and development of their own culture. In addition, the result of cross-cultural translation communication is not a simple operation of $1 + 1 = 2$, nor the result of the simple addition of culture A and culture B. It will not only produce the effect that can be obtained by non-arithmetic addition, but also stimulate people's interest in pursuing more knowledge and information and infinite creativity (Zou, 2000). Therefore, it may be a chemical catalytic reaction produced after the fusion of A and B

cultures, which can fundamentally change one of the cultural properties, and the society in which the culture is located. It can be seen that translation communication is the only way to form, preserve and develop alien culture. Translation communication also gives new vitality to the target culture and realises the appreciation of foreign culture.

TRANSLATION COMMUNICATION FORMS CULTURAL ACCUMULATION

The spread of translation culture enables the cultural wealth of the source language to be inherited and spread in the culture of the target language, becoming the cultural heritage accumulated by the target language society, and making the foreign language culture accumulates and precipitates in the long river of history. The inheritance and development of this culture is the cultural accumulation. The longer the translation culture spreads, the deeper the accumulation in the target language society.

This cultural accumulation is not only a simple diachronic process of mechanically transmitting the culture of the previous generation to the next generation, but also a synchronic creative process of constantly absorbing foreign excellent culture in the process of communication (Lei & Xu, 2006). The accumulation of foreign language culture has promoted the co-evolution and development of human civilisation. For example, the brilliant Buddhist culture of ancient India has long fallen in its own homeland, but it has been preserved in China through Buddhist scripture translation activities, found an environment for survival, development and accumulation, and become an important part of Chinese culture.

TRANSLATION COMMUNICATION PROMOTES CULTURAL CHANGE

Cultural change means that any culture in the world is in dynamic development and change to varying degrees. It has experienced the process of emergence, development, change, decline and regeneration. Translation communication makes foreign language culture becomes a continuous organism and changes constantly. The cross-cultural communication of translation is the most common and fundamental reason for the change of different language culture. For example, thanks to the spread of Western democratic and scientific ideas in China, the May 4th Movement and the new culture movement in China at the beginning of the 20th century were a large-scale cultural change in China's modern society. After the baptism of the May 4th Movement and the new culture movement, Chinese culture not only accepted the dissemination of modern western democratic and scientific ideas, but also accepted the wide dissemination of Marxism in China, which provided necessary conditions for the construction of a new social and cultural model and cultural system, Thus, Chinese culture has realised the leap from semi-colonial and semi-feudal culture to socialist culture, and created a new vision and new realm of Chinese cultural development. For another example, ancient Roman culture not only inherited and carried forward Greek civilisation, but more importantly, with the outward expansion of the Roman Empire, it spreads the same civilisation to the whole western European continent, making western European countries change in their own unique way in combination with their own cultural context. It could be observed that cross-cultural translation communication has provided a strong driving force for the innovation and development of social culture. Throughout the history of human social and cultural

development, although there have been many reasons for the change of different language culture, the most common and fundamental reason is cross-cultural translation and communication.

SUMMARY

Although sometimes translation has a negative impact on the target culture, at times, foreign translation of culture also meets people's will and corrodes their spirit. However, on the whole, the vigorous translation activities and prosperous translation cases often prompt the progress of the target language society and the prosperity of its culture. Rich and colourful foreign cultures with different forms bring new dynamic elements to the target language through translation and introduction activities, and promote the development and prosperity of the target country and social culture.

Translation is a cross-cultural communication activity, which essentially has all the attributes, characteristics and functions of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, it plays a key role in introducing foreign cultures and promoting the innovation and development of target culture in cross-cultural communication. In this way, we can also examine our own culture in a more complex and extensive cultural background of other nationalities, and carry out dialogues and exchanges with world civilisation. This leads to the expansion of new thinking patterns in the target culture, and the expansion of thinking will certainly change the original thinking set, leading to new creation and even revolution. Translation could also give birth to powerful forces, influence and change the target language society through social movements, and drive the history and culture of the target language society forward. Facts have proven that translation plays an important and unique role in the process of world civilisation which is closely associated with the accumulation of human culture, the development of society and the progress of civilisation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

What helped me the most was my doctoral supervisor Professor Dr. Salasiah Che Lah. Professor's serious and rigorous academic attitude made me break many bad habits of carelessness, and let me know that the way of learning requires not only bold innovation, but also careful thinking. The thesis was carefully conceived and carefully completed under the guidance of the professor. The training of "teaching people to fish" has helped me making great progress in writing. Not only that, the encouragement and praise of the professor has always become an inexhaustible source of my learning motivation, but also increased my confidence in the academic path.

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