

New Features and Requirement of E-C/C-E Translation of China`s Foreign Communication

Liqiao Liang^{1,*}

¹ MA, Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation, Shanghai International Studies University, Hongkou, Shanghai, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 68560948@qq.com

ABSTRACT

In order to well deliver “Story from China”, it is necessary to devote effort on foreign communication, which is demanding of the quality of translation and interpretation, especially in the context of entering the New Era of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. The quality of E-C or C-E translation and interpretation is important to the overseas promotion of Chinese culture, and it will be discussed in this article, too. To sum up, what Chinese translators and interpreters can acquire from this article, is the new features of the language service(s) they are likely to deliver, and suggestions which can help them improving the service they provide for customers.

Keywords: *Linguistics, Foreign Communication; Translation and Interpretation; Globalization (Turn)*

1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign communication translation aims to introduce China to foreign countries by translating various information related to China into foreign languages through various propaganda media such as TV news, internet applications, exhibition platforms, newspapers and magazines. Foreign propaganda translation has become particularly important in the context of the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. First of all, foreign communication is part of journalism, and translation is an important part of ensuring effective foreign communication. Considering that foreign communication`s audience is not a domestic one, foreign language(s) must be implemented under many circumstances. Moreover, to have the quality of translation guaranteed, only solid bilingual conversion skills are obviously not enough, but also a high degree of intercultural communication skills, and certain computer-aided tool operation skills are necessary to complete the task of foreign propaganda translation with high quality. Therefore, it is meaningful to have some new features of foreign communication translation and its new requirements for translators discussed, which will help translators to better having China "make its voice heard" in the new era, minimize errors in translation, avoid mis-translation, and accurately and clearly show China to the world.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Translation, as a human communication activity, always aims to achieve certain purposes, such as reading instructions in order to use imported products, watching subtitles in order to understand the meaning of foreign film and television works, and so on. In order to do a good job of foreign communication translation nowadays, we ought to understand the goals and positions of foreign communication translation in modern context. In this section, we will discuss the public opinion positions, power discourse theory and the globalization turn in translation theory in the context of the era we are living in.

2.1. General Goals of Nowadays Translation

The completion of translation task(s) does not only refer to the competence of certain language service provider(s), practical experience also show that adequate translation service would greatly promote the efficiency of translation, and is very helpful in order to have rumors be dispelled. This is to say that, generally, translation and (or) interpretation in modern context does not merely have information contained in SL expressed by TL, but also with the aid of cross-cultural communication awareness as well as modern technology. Under such circumstances the content of “communication” would be greatly enriched — translation, in this way, can also

help creating a better international image in the international society^[1].

2.2. Traditional and New Opinion Tools both Playing Important Parts

From a generalized point of view, the word "Opinion Tool" has various definitions, mainly refers to platforms to express opinions from various actors. According to Yu and Fan in 2018^[2], opinion tools can be defined as traditional tools and non-traditional tools, or mainstream as well as non-mainstream ones. Entering the 20s of the 21st century, traditional tools such as newspapers, books, journals and TV will continue to play a prominent role, while new non-traditional opinion positions such as the Internet and self-media will also emerge and their role cannot be ignored.

2.3. Translation and Interpretation Help Improving the Quality of Foreign Communication

According to Dong in 2020^[3], the study of discourse and the establishment of a link between it and power is probably one of the greatest contributions to the world made by the French scholar Foucault. In certain contexts, a people (states, in other cases) obey certain rules and can use discourse to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas to other people (or in other words, states)^[4]. In this way it is clear that Foucault ties "power" and "discourse" are closely bound together^[5]. A word spoken by a person, or a voice made by a country in the international community using diplomatic envoys or books, articles, and audio-visual works, is usually never meaningless and must reflect some purpose of that person (country). According to a survey conducted by Liang in 2021^[6], on the image (behavior) of translators in Hollywood military blockbusters over the past fifty years reveals that the United States has gone from barely glorifying the foreign wars in which it participated to portraying the U.S. military's translating behavior in war with a great deal of emphasis, reflecting the fact that the United States has been adjusting its foreign propaganda strategy as its own power and international status have changed, and has gone from simply sending its own troops It has changed from the conceit that it must be the "righteous one" as long as it sends troops, to using the powerful propaganda machine of Hollywood to constantly justify its actions to the world by elevating itself and degrading its competitors. In other words, all international actors must take a firm grip of discourse power in their own hands, in order to let other actors have adequate understanding of its own. For example, when the United States wants to attack actor(s) in the international society, a phrase its media often applied is the "Thucydides' trap". The "Thucydides' trap" refers to the important idea expressed by the famous Greek historian Thucydides in his famous book "The

Peloponnesian War", that "there must be a war" between the emerging countries and the established powers. However, Thucydides made this assertion on the basis of some specific circumstances of the city-states represented on both sides of the war (Athens and Sparta), and it is impossible to summarize the situation of all the countries of the world in such a simple way. Therefore, the "Thucydides' trap" here is actually a new opinion forced by American politicians, based on the doctrine of the ancients, with the aim of making these actors as their enemies. The modern sense of such "Thucydides' trap" was first raised by Graham Allison in 2015. See his article originally published on <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/>.

2.4. The Turn of Globalization of Translation Studies

Translation is an ancient human activity, which can be traced back to the primitive tribal communication at the very beginning of human existence. Accordingly, translation has been studied since the very early times, and translation research had already completed three major stages of "literature (turn) - linguistics - cultural studies" through the linguistic and cultural turns over a long period of time^[7], placing translation in the context of culture and history —translation in the context of culture, history, the interaction of cultural, political and historical factors on translation, and the constraining effect of these factors on translation are in this way viewed.

In recent years, many scholars have begun to emphasize the impact of globalization trends on translation in two main ways: first, the translation market has been profoundly influenced by translation technology. With the assistance of various computer-assisted translation tools, the workload of translators in handling translation tasks has been greatly enhanced, but some problems may arise due to the improper use of the tools. In addition, English has become an "ELF (English as an International Lingua Franca)" and occupies a very important place in the demand for translation services^[8-9].

3. NEW FEATURE(S) OF CHINESE TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION ON FOREIGN COMMUNICATION

Here the discussion would be conducted with the author's practical experience. Though the translation events may not be discussed too much, readers could easily have the author's experience traced with the help of the part "References", since the author will quote from some of his previous works. From 2017 to 2020, the author worked as an interpreter and translator for a national marine economic exhibition, a fishery exhibition,

a municipal level (later developed into provincial one) agricultural economic exhibition and an international academic conference hosted by a local marine-related university and other large and small foreign-related affairs in a city in western Guangdong, translating a large number of conference documents, exhibition building signage and acting as conference interpreter and escort translator for certain important clients. It is discovered that recent times a huge increase can be seen at various subjects of translation and relevant employers, therefore the content that is needed to be translated also soared. In order to process this massive piece of workload, only men's brains and dictionaries are not enough. Therefore, CAT tools are becoming popular these years, whereas implement without revise could bring harmful consequences. Last but not least, English is developed into "ELF", which is also important for translators to notice.

3.1. Various Subjects and Increase in its Employers` Number

Traditionally, people tend to think of "foreign communication (translation)" as a high-profile activity that generally occurs only on accordingly high-level occasions and is reported by high-profile traditional media (which means, the official one) with the help of modern communication tools, and the content is relatively homogeneous, generally focusing on the country's local customs and customs, introducing the country's development achievements and general policies, and reported by authoritative figures. In fact, with the opening of China's doors to the outside world, foreigners` information sources of China will not be confined to the traditional mainstream public opinion; in China's increasingly developed education and training industry, foreign language education is on the rise: in English, for example, there is a huge market for English language learning in China, with a large number of students at all academic levels trying to learn English, and tens of billions of dollars invested annually in this regard^[10]. In addition, the rising variety of online forums, instant messengers, blogs and other self-media are emerging windows for foreigners to learn about China^[11], not to mention that foreigners are experiencing China by going there in person. If they do not know Chinese, they can get to know China through various signs (mainly in English) and guide maps in Chinese and foreign languages on the streets. Some scholars have studied the communicative role of bilingual street signs in some Chinese cities from a cultural perspective and have achieved some results^[12-13].

3.2. Surge in the Contents of Translation

More people involved in foreign communication translation work means a greater workload needs to be dealt with. For translators and interpreters, the

diversification of the subject matter of foreign communication translation means a significant increase in the amount of textual (spoken) content that needs to be translated. This "content" is not only the "workload" in terms of word or working hours, but also the fact that foreign communication translation will be combined with more disciplines and forms of presentation, which is a considerable challenge to the working experience and knowledge of professional translators. Such training has indeed produced a large number of students who are proficient in foreign languages and can better undertake translation tasks; however, in practice, a large number of professionals does not necessarily mean an even distribution. By the same token, in China, where foreign language education is very developed, the main body of foreign translation operation is not only professional translators. Although many places have important outreach platforms and corresponding demand for outreach translators, it is difficult to attract professionals to "help" them for various reasons. Even in some big cities with developed economies, where there seems to be no shortage of translation talents, there are many simple translation errors in these places.

3.3. CAT`s Pros and Cons

It is true that CAT (computer-aided tools) can greatly improve the efficiency of translators, but this must be based on the reasonable use and editing of translators^[14-15]; once the "aided" of computer-aided translation tools is ignored for various reasons, there will definitely be many mistakes if the mechanic output results are directly used. This tendency of relying too much on computer-aided translation tools is real in reality and has caused certain negative effects on the image of certain (foreign-related) exhibitions and (exhibition-running) cities^[16].

3.4. "ELF" Context Demands More

The most spoken language in the world is considered to be Chinese^[17], and it has been pointed out that the population of Spanish, once the second most spoken language^[18], has now surpassed that of English. However, none of this can shake the reality that English is the most widely spoken language and has become an "English as an International Lingua Franca (ELF)". When English becomes an international lingua franca, the number of non-native speakers of English far exceeds the number of native speakers; the apparently native cultural features of English are reduced, but in fact, it may carry with it a variety of cultural backgrounds of its speakers, presenting a "super-diversity"^[19], which poses a considerable challenge to translators.

4. SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATORS

Four suggestions for translators and interpreters are raised below, based on the theories and facts stated in the

preceding two sections. The four suggestions, or tactics provided below are raised in accordance to the four previous features raised in the former section. There are more and more people devote themselves into the translation industry, with the amount of workload also surges greatly. Therefore, the nature of translators and their working conditions are different from they used to be several years ago. To deal with massive workload, massive producing tools, in this case, CAT tool, which performs like a double-edge sword is needed. The characters of ELF also require translation works that deliver the meaning instead of word-for-word one. Therefore, considering that there is much workload needed to be dealt with, whereas the allocation of translators and interpreters are uneven, it is suggested that translators and interpreters change their mind of employment, and devote themselves to places that need language service providers, though these places may not as developed as where they strive to work at in the past. Though CAT tools can greatly improve the producing capacity of translators, accept the result(s) without any revise or proofreading would bring devastating results. Therefore, the training of translators must add the part of proper use of CAT tools. Last but not least, as "ELF" require a stronger sense of cultural communication awareness, it is necessary for translators to improve their cross-cultural awareness and according knowledge. This section would be put at the forward position to show its importance.

4.1. Improve Cross-Cultural Communication Competences to Adapt to Multiple Situations of Language Service

As translation enters the era of "globalization", and English becomes the ELF, translators should pay attention to not only simply language conversion, but also to the multiple cultural differences behind the use of language(s), as well as to the common sense of cross-cultural communication. This means that the language service providers should pay attention to the language and the cultural differences behind the use of the language. This means that translators should pay attention to more study and accumulation relevant knowledge and usages in general; however, in view of the fact that the authenticity of some so-called "knowledge" may not be able to withstand the scrutiny due to the over-developed information on the Internet, it also requires translators to make efforts to conduct research in order to avoid serious consequences due to the wrong use ^[20].

4.2. Serve in Places in Need to Highlight the Volunteer Spirit

"Translation" is a profession as well as a service; there is a market for service providers, and these service providers will naturally hope that their services can achieve good economic benefits. However, when

"translation" is linked to "foreign communication", it is not only commercial in nature, but also has strong political and diplomatic attributes. We should respect the reasonable desire of translators to be recognized and financially rewarded for the services they provide, but we should not emphasize the high economic rewards of this industry as some training institutions' marketing numbers do. We should pay attention to guiding the patriotism and dedication of excellent translators, encouraging them to go to "positions" where there is a demand for foreign communication translation but a lack of professionals, and improving their treatment so that they can better serve the work of maintaining China's foreign communication discourse.

When the author was working as a translator for various exhibitions in a city of the western Guangdong area, he had realized that the translation task(s) of various documents maps, advertisements, as well as road signs for important exhibitions was often undertaken by undergraduate English majors recruited from local universities on a temporary basis. Also, the translation competences of these undergraduates are varied, and some of them directly used the automatic translation results from certain translation websites without any quality controlling revise, which naturally caused errors in the translation products as a result. After a fair in an eastern municipality issued an invitation for foreign language (service) volunteers, there were many applicants from local colleges and universities; because of the oversupply, each college of each school was allocated a limited number of places. In one international studies university's graduate institute of translators and interpreters, there were more than 200 graduate students in one grade (had submitted application forms), but the quota this institution had got was only ten. What's more, some educational institutions even offer "foreign affairs assistants" and "professional visitors" to the exhibition to solicit students to enroll in the course, which charges are not cheap at all. This indicated that China has abundant competent language service providers, whereas the allocation of them is not even. In some popular sites there is an obvious oversupply, but lacks in many more places. For translators and interpreters, therefore, it is unfair to say that there is no enough demand. They need to try a little harder developing the markets in places that are seemingly not that "popular".

4.3. Strengthen the training of CAT Tools to Offset Their Negative Effects

It is true that the processing speed of translation tasks can be greatly improved with the aid of computer software or web translation tools and other devices. However, it is necessary to provide translators with targeted training so that they know how to assert their "subject" status when translating. At the same time, terminology database technology can also be introduced

to reserve fixed translations of some specialized terms in a targeted manner, so as to improve the processing efficiency of the computer the next time the translation is performed.

4.4. Always Have Basic Language Skills Practised

No matter how much intercultural ability is required and how high the requirements for computer-assisted translation ability are, the fundamental ability of a translator is still the basic language skills he or she has. If the basic language skills are not good, even if he is equipped with efficient translation aids and a large-capacity corpus, he will have problems in processing the text as well. Therefore, in addition to strengthening the learning of computer-aided technology and cross-cultural knowledge, translators should not be lazy on the training on his basic "listening, reading, writing and translating" skills.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper summarizes several characteristics of foreign communication translation in China at present (the 2020s) based on sufficient translation practice experience and literature research, and in combination with these characteristics, concludes that foreign communication translation in China has seen an increase in the number of practitioners. The above four factors will greatly affect the quality of translators' output and the image of clients in the minds of foreign audiences, so they cannot be ignored. In response to these specific problems, strategies are proposed for translators to enhance their awareness of cross-cultural communication, change their career choice and actively join the translation field needed by society, use CAT tools correctly and strengthen their basic skills of "listening, reading, writing and translating". Indeed, the definition of translation (and interpretation) is seldom mentioned or discussed in this article. However, the definition of translation is not happened to be important in what was discussed before. Researchers may have various definitions on the term of "translation", but it is clear that the style and meaning in SL would be expected to accurately expressed in TL by translators and interpreters in foreign communication translation tasks. Under such circumstances, translators and interpreters must bear in mind the new features of such tasks, and improve themselves accordingly to get prepared for the tasks.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Liang Liqiao as the sole author of this article, undertook the sole process of creating this piece of writing, including the generation of the initial ideas, material collection and analysis, writing, revising, submitting and all other works relating to it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express my gratitude for GIIT, SHISU which refreshed him with fine skills and tactics of translation studies, and Assistant Professor Baozhu Wang from School of Marxism Studies, SHISU, whose brilliant introduction offered me the very inspiration of creating this brainchild of himself.

REFERENCES

- [1] Q.X. Han, S.G.Chen, Theoretical Interpretation of the New Era of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, *Social Sciences in China* (01) ,2018: 5–16.
- [2] Z.H. Yu, J.H. Fan, On the realization path of the construction of public opinion positions in the publicity and ideological work of colleges and universities, *Modern Communication* (05) ,2018: 138–137.
- [3] J.Z. Dong, The Significance of Foucault's Thought of Power Discourse to the Construction of Ideological Discourse, *Journal of the Party School of CPC Chengdu Municipal Committee* (02) ,2020:18–20+24.
- [4] Z.Q. Yang et al, The Contemplation about Discourse of Ideological and Political Education and the Path to Improvement of Effectiveness, *Social Sciences Journal of Universities in Shanxi* 30(02) ,2018:88–92.
- [5] M. Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir*, translated by Q. Xie and Y. Ma, SDX Joint Publishing Company, Beijing, 1998, p.62.
- [6] L.Q. Liang, The Construction of U.S. Armed Forces' Image Through Translation Activities in Hollywood Blockbusters, *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 4(10) ,2021 :137–147.
- [7] J. Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*, translated by D.F. Li et al, FLTRP, Beijing, 2014.
- [8] A. Pym, Globalization and the politics of translation studies, *Meta*, 51 (4), 2006: 744-757.
- [9] J. Lambert, La traduction, les langues et la communication de masse. Les ambiguïtés du discours international, *Target*, 1 (2), 1989:215-237.
- [10] Y.F. Tan et al, The Effects of English Speaking and Listening Skills on Gender Difference in Employment: Evidence from CGSS Data, *Finance & Economics*, (10), 2017:122-132.

- [11] D.B. Xiang, Characteristics and Strategies of Public Opinions on Tibet on International Social Media, *Journal of Intelligence*, 35 (05), 2016: 20-26.
- [12] Y.B. Luo, J.J. Ma, The Linguistic Landscape of Zhuhai: A Study of the Use of English Signs in the Public Place, *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 4 (09): 77-89.
- [13] G. Song, Conflicts and Complexities: A Study of Hong Kong's Bilingual Street Signs from the Functional Perspective on Translation", *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 41(10), 2018: 886-898. DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2019.1663860
- [14] B.B. Liang, Feasibility Study on the Application of CAT into the Translation of Humanities Books, *Contemporary Foreign Languages Studies*, (01), 2018:73-81+110.
- [15] W.Z. Lu, H. Chen, Translation Technique and the Cultivation of Professional Translators and Interpreters, *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education*, (03), 2014:62-67.
- [16] L.Q. Liang, S.H. Guo, A Study on Maritime-related English Translation Problems and Solutions - A Case Study of Foreign Communication Translation for Chinese Maritime-related Exhibitions and Enterprises, *Journal of Jiangxi Vocational and Technical College of Electricity*, 33(07), 2020:122-124.
- [17] L. Chen, J.C. Niu, Chinese Language`s International Promotion in the Perspective of Language, *Jianghai Academic Journal*, (04), 2017:216-221.
- [18] Z.W. Kong, Spanish-Speaking World that Ought Not to be Forgotten, *View on Publishing*, (03), 2010:36-38.
- [19] B. Siedlhofer, *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*, OUP, Oxford, 2010:10.
- [20] L.Q. Liang, The Role of Translators and Interpreters in Multi-cultural Context, *Journal of Kaifeng Vocational College of Cultural & Art*, 40(12), 2020:53-56.