

## A Study of the Artistic Terms of Qinqiang under Ecological Translation Theory

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**Abstract**—Qinqiang Opera, profound and diversified, is a great intangible cultural heritage in China. Due to the differences in translator's cultural backgrounds, academic interests and methods of study, it is hard to find a uniform and accurate standard expression of the artistic terms of Qinqiang in English translation, which affects the international communication of it. The principle of "three-dimensional" transformation in eco-translatability can provide an important methodological guidance culturally and nationally such as "Ponytail Swing", "The Beard Skills" "Transfiguration" and "The Vibration of Gauze Cap" so as to serve the inheritance of Qinqiang art successfully.

**Keywords**-Eco-translation; Three-dimensional Transformation; Qinqiang Artistic Terms; Unique Skills

### I. INTRODUCTION

Qinqiang Opera is the wisdom with the long history in China. On May 20, 2006, Qinqiang Opera of Shaanxi Province was ranked as the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in the world. After hundreds of years of its development, Qinqiang Opera is still active in the northwest of China. As one of the four major operas in the China's theater industry, Qinqiang is favored by its bold, heroic, vigorous and tragic, high-pitched style. Most of the characters are named as Sheng, Dan, Jing and Chou in the play which is act in the way of singing, reading, acting, and combating. More and more foreign friends have a keen interest in the traditional Chinese folk art, Qinqiang, but due to the differences in cultural background, academic interests and methods of study, there are many differences among the foreign and domestic scholars about Qinqiang. But it is hard to find a uniform and accurate standard expression of the artistic terms of Qinqiang in English translation, so the translation of opera art terminology are rarely studied. Therefore, Qinqiang culture encountered some obstacles in the communications which is not conducive to its heritage and spread.

This paper follows the principle of "three-dimensional" transformation of the basic theory of eco-translation studies. It starts from Qinqiang with its vast expanse of genre and local characteristics, and analyzes the "unique skills" in the translation such as "Ponytail Swing", "The Beard Skills", "Transfiguration" and The Vibration of Gauze Cap. the national characteristics, cultural characteristics, making the opera translation have rules to follow.

### II. THE "THREE-DIMENSIONAL" PRINCIPLE IN ECOLOGICAL TRANSLATION THEORY

From the perspective of ecological theory, the ecological translation studies take China's ecological wisdom as the basis and the principle of "natural selection" as its cornerstone. It is a cross-cultural study on the ecology and its interaction and mutual relations of ecological translation, textual ecology and "translating community" research. The ecological environment is not only referring to the language environment, but also covers the original world and the translator's understanding to the all aspects of the cultural "communication" society. From this it can be seen that eco-translatability places translation activities on a broader perspective than just on the linguistic level. On the other hand, it emphasized the translator's adaptation choice, we can see that eco-translatability emphasizes Translator as the center of the whole translation. [1]

The basic theory of eco-translation studies believed all the translation methods can be included into the "three-dimensional" transformations. Under the principle of "multi-dimensional adaptation and adaptive selection", the translation is relatively concentrated on the adaptive choice with transformation of linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions. [2]

### III. THE ADAPTIVE TRANSFORMATION FROM THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL IN THE QINQIANG ROLES TERMINOLOGY

#### A. *The Qinqiang Roles Terms Of The Adaptive Transformation From The Linguistic Dimension*

The theory "adaptive transformation from the linguistic dimension" is the translator's choices of language in the process of translation. This kind of linguistic adaptation of choice is carried out in different aspects and at different levels. [3] When translating the Qinqiang roles terms, due to the differences between China and western cultures, the translator should adopt the transliteration method in order to present the national characteristics inherent in the terms of the Qinqiang, as far as possible, to the readers, and accurately and completely express the terms of the Qinqiang culture. A cultural symbol of the multiple meanings is very important, so keeping the original pronunciation with some supplementary explanation can be recommended in the translation.

There are four major categories in the Qinqiang Opera. The terms can be named as Sheng, Dan, Jing, and Chou.

Generally speaking, Dan is the general term for the female characters; Sheng and Jing are the male characters. Because of the differences in age, status, personality and performance characteristics, it is subdivided into different categories, such as Xiao Sheng and Wu Sheng. The role terms can be adapted to the linguistic form of choice, which can be translated in the use of “transliteration method”. In the Qinqiang Opera, Xu Sheng (The Bearded Male Role) wears the mouthpiece (fake mustache) with solemn appearance who always keeps firm and man of integrity. Young people of all walks can be translated as Xiao Sheng (the Young Male Role); A martial arts superb role in the stage who gives a sense of domineering which can be translated as Wu Sheng (the Warrior Male Role).

Dan, the collective name of female characters in the Qinqiang Opera which can be translated as Dan (the Female Role), which is mainly divided into Xiao Dan, Hua Dan and Cai Dan. Xiao Dan mostly refers to the young women, and plays as a fairy, un married beautiful lady, who was called as the Young Female Role; Hua Dan (the Flowery Female Role ) such roles are beautiful, handsome and generous, often wearing high heels shoes in the play, walking light and agile. Hence, this role requires the actor’s waist and feet are very smart. Besides, Cai Dan is also known as “an ugly Dan”, or “a go-between”. Here the word Cai does not mean that she is beautiful, but shows a vilified meaning. So it can be translated as Cai Dan (the Clownish Female Role). Qinqiang’s Jing is also known as “big flower face” (the face was made up heavily). This is because the artists’ faces will be painted with different colors of paint, forming an eye-catching image, and the translator can translate it into Jing (the Painted Face Role). He represents an honest and healthy image who plays an important role in the royal court. In addition to playing sinister, cunning, greedy and selfish role, Chou more often plays an alert, clever, humorous role. As his nose being smeared by a small piece of white powder, he is commonly known as Chou. (The Clown Role). [4]

#### *B. The Adaptive Transformation From The Cultural Dimension For Unique Skills*

The theory “adaptive transformation from the cultural dimension” means that translators pay attention to the transmission and interpretation of the bilingual cultural connotation in the process of translation. This kind of cultural dimension of adaptive choice conversion is concerned with the differences between the source language culture and target language culture in nature and content, and avoids distorting the original text from the point of view of the target language culture. While translating the source language, the translator should pay attention to the entire cultural system to which the language belongs[5]. The cultural connotation embodied by the art of the Qinqiang is usually referring to the source culture. These terms shows implicit in the name of these cultural heritage, customs and other words with the implied meaning. Under such the certain cultural background, the translator should have cultural awareness in the process of translation for the conventional meaning as well.

A good point in case is the Ponytail Swing in the Qinqiang which was one of the unique skills in Chinese opera. This piece of art mainly shows the mood of anger in order to release the emotion of anger in the heart, which is used mostly by Sheng and Xiao Sheng. The Ponytail for males differs a lot from the ponytail in females. The males’ Ponytail’s hair root is erected on the head, while the female’s hair is usually set a bunch of hair left in the head. According to the needs of the story, the main hair of the pony tail can be used for performing, in this way it cannot be translated as “Pigtail Swinging” which is explained in Collins dictionary that “If someone has a pigtail or pigtails, their hair is braided into two lengths.” The Chinese translation was “Bianzi”. According to the description above, Ponytail means a hair style that draws the hair back so that it hangs down in back of the head like a pony’s tail. This unique art Ponytail Swing is a treasure in Qinqiang Opera which must has true manifestation in order to translate accurately.

#### *C. The Adaptive Transformation From The Communicative Dimension For Unique Skills*

The theory “the adaptive transformation from the communicative dimension” means the translator in the translation process should consider the adaptive choice conversion in the bilingual communication. This kind of adaptable choice transformation of communicative dimension requires that in addition to the transfer of linguistic information and cultural connotation, the translator should focus on the communicative aspect of the choice transformation and pay attention to whether the communicative intention in the original text can be obtained in the translation. Obviously, the “three-dimensional” conversion in communication level mainly occurs in the translation practice, which is a focus of applied research. [6] Translation is a cross-cultural communicative activity, and any communicative activity has a certain communicative purpose. For example, The Beard Skill is the quintessence of Qinqiang Opera which required the translator not only to be a communicator but also a translator of culture in the unique skills. The reason why readers in target language cannot understand the translation is not only the cultural aspect but also the western ways of expression and thinking habits. In traditional Chinese operas, the beards worn by the opera figures are collectively referred to as “Ran Kou”. In the performance of traditional Chinese operas, it is often used to show people’s feelings through the dance. It is called The Beard Skills, commonly known as “playing beard”. In the Qinqiang Opera, the “Kou Tiao” is same appellation for the beard performance in Qinqiang Opera.

In general, The Beard Skills for spreading means being anxious and depressed; shaking means being decrepit, annoying, frightened and scary; winding means sorrowful and rebuking; rubbing mostly shows being comfortable and in meditation; lifting means thinking and sighing; pushing mostly reflects lament; holding in the mouth means being angry and eager; blowing expresses anger and plaint; and pulling is mostly used for looking up and looking down, throwing means being angry and irritated. [7]

In addition, there are “Dou Mao Chi” unique skill, which mainly shows the emotions when the characters are arrogant or reflecting over some issues, and is used mostly for some people with high status. “Dou Mao Chi” was also known as “Mao Chi Gong” or “Shan Mao Chi”. In Qinqiang opera, the official name of “Mao Chi” is called “Fu Tou”, a kind of hat worn by ancient officials. Mao Chi is a kind of decoration which can be divided into the pointed wings, round wings, square wings. Some long-brimmed wings are attached to the cap yarn (helmets worn by ancient prime minister) which are also known as shoulder-pore-typed wings. Playing cap wings is completely controlled by the actor’s neck and back of the head, so it takes pains and time to practice a lot. According to the background of these details in QinQiang Opera, to meet the communication habits and expressions, “Dou Mao Chi” can be translated as the Vibration of Wings of Gauze Cap. In addition to the language transfer and cultural connotation, the translator should put the emphasis of the conversion on the communication in this way can be reflected successfully in the translation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Under the theoretical framework of eco-translation, the English translation of artistic terms in Qinqiang mainly carries out the multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptability for selection mainly in the three dimensions of language, culture and communication. Hu Gengshen pointed out: from a practical point of view, language, culture and communication are the three main points accepted by the translation community, and they are often the cornerstones of transformation in the process of translation. From a theoretical point of view, the way of translation in communication, linguistic and cultural studies is based on the actual systematic study; language, culture and communication are always been the focus of translation theorists. From a logical point of the view, translation is the transformation of language, and language is also a carrier of culture and culture is the accumulation of communication, so language, culture, and communication has an inherent and logical relationship, which also reflects the basic content of translation.

Therefore, under the perspective of eco-translation theory, this paper analyzes the three-dimensional transformation of language, culture and communication in the translation of the art of Qinqiang art terminology so that we can comprehend the quintessence of Qinqiang Opera. Actually, adaptive choices are more adaptable to meet the requirements of target readers. It should be pointed out that the theory of eco-translation is still at a stage of continuous development and improvement, as experienced by other theories in its development stage. Some issues are still worth discussing, such as “it is not clear enough to identify the relationship on the ecological translation theory selection, adaptation, and environment. [8] Therefore, in the future research, we should not only explore the theoretical terms of ecological translation theory in depth, but also explain and apply the theory in practical application.

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