

*Original Paper*

Study on Subtitle Translation of *China in the Classics* from the  
Perspective of Three-Dimensional Transformation of  
Eco-translatology

Zhuoyue Wang<sup>1</sup> & Bingwen Sun<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> School of Foreign Languages, Hubei University of Technology, Hubei Province, China

\* Corresponding author, Bingwen Sun, Department of Foreign Language, Hubei University of Technology, Wuhan, China

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**Abstract**

*With the accelerated development of globalization and the continuous improvement of China's comprehensive national strength, the exchanges between China and other countries in the world are increasingly frequent, among which cultural exchanges occupy an important position. Cultural exchange is a bridge connecting China and foreign countries, and also an inherent requirement for promoting cultural globalization and diversity. Against this background, it is particularly important to tell Chinese stories well and convey the voice of China. Among them, cultural variety shows have the mission of spreading China's excellent traditional culture to the world and establishing a good image of the country. Therefore, the translation of subtitle translation of cultural variety shows is crucial. Based on the theory of eco-translatology, this paper takes the *China in the Classics* as an example and explores how translators choose translation strategies to adapt to this specific cultural context from linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions.*

*This paper includes five parts. The first part introduces the study background, purpose and the text, *China in the Classics*. The second part provides an overview of domestic and international studies on eco-translatology. The third part systematically introduces the translation eco-environment of *China in the Classics*. The fourth part conducts a comparative analysis of the bilingual texts of *China in the Classics* from three dimensions. The last part concludes the whole paper.*

**Keywords**

*Eco-translatology, three-dimensional transformation, the subtitle translation, *China in the Classics**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

With the continuous advancement of globalization, China's comprehensive national strength continues to strengthen, and exchanges between China and other countries around the world have become more and more frequent, in which cultural exchanges play an important role. Cultural exchange is a bridge between China and the outside world, and also plays a role in promoting cultural globalization and diversity. Against this background, how to effectively tell Chinese stories and voice China has become a realistic and important topic. Cultural programs are responsible for spreading China's excellent traditional culture to the world and shaping the positive image of the country. Therefore, the subtitle translation of cultural programs is receiving more and more attention.

This research takes ecological translation as the theoretical basis and *China in the Classics* as a case to analyze the complex and constantly changing translation ecological environment in the current subtitle translation. Through the comparative analysis of the two versions of Chinese and English subtitles, the paper explores the translator's adaptation and selection in the language dimension, culture dimension and communication dimension, and how to maintain an ecological balance between the source language and the target language. The goal is to maintain the balance and harmony between the source language ecosystem and the target language ecosystem, so as to obtain a translation effect that can play a reference role in external propaganda translation.

Professor Hu Gengshen put forward the concept of ecological translation and defined it as a path to understand translation from an ecological perspective. The core method is three-dimensional conversion. Ecological translation theory has a wide application and considerable influence in cultural texts. This article hopes to analyze the transformation of *China in the Classics* in the three dimensions of language, culture and communication with the help of the three-dimensional transformation theory of ecological translation, so as to explore the guiding significance of this theory for translation practice.

### 1.2 Research Purpose and Significance

Influenced by the theory of ecological translation, this article analyzes *China in the Classics* from the three dimensions of language, culture and communication. The English translation of this work plays a significant role in promoting China's positive narrative and shaping the image of Chinese youth, and deepening the global understanding of Chinese culture. Ecological translation theory has developed rapidly in recent years, especially in the application of important text translation, which is of great significance to the field of translation theory and has also attracted a lot of attention.

This article uses this theory to analyze the text, hoping to make some practical contributions to the promotion of ecological translation theory. The role of this theory in literary translation illustrates its value in literary works, and also enriches the research in the two fields of literary translation and subtitle translation. By analyzing the translation techniques used in literary texts, readers can better understand the theory of ecological translation.

This study adopts the theory of ecological translation to conduct a more systematic analysis of translation, which provides a new perspective for the subtitle translation of *China in the Classics*, and can also be used as a reference for the subtitle translation of cultural programs. The translation reflects the unique charm of Chinese language and traditional culture, which is conducive to the overseas dissemination of Chinese culture, and is also a feasible way to tell Chinese stories well. In addition, studying the subtitle translation of *China in the Classics* from the three-dimensional transformation principle of ecological translation can also provide some useful references for external propaganda translation.

At present, China attaches more importance to the construction of cultural soft power, and TV programs are one of the main communication media. However, at present, the international influence of Chinese cultural promotion TV programs still needs to be improved, and there are still not many high-quality cultural programs with English subtitles. The empirical translation research carried out under the framework of three-dimensional conversion of ecological translation mostly focuses on films and documentaries, and TV programs have not received enough attention. Moreover, the subtitle translation in these cultural promotion programs also lacks systematic research.

Therefore, this article hopes to study the subtitle translation of representative cultural programs from the three-dimensional conversion perspective of ecological translation. Taking the well-received *China in the Classics* series as the starting point, we explore its translation strategy and provide some references for the future subtitle translation of Chinese culture promotion programs. The goal is to improve overseas audiences' understanding of Chinese culture and also put forward constructive suggestions for the improvement of the translation level of such programs.

### 1.3 Introduction to the *China in the Classics*

*China in the Classics* is a program that combines classical Chinese literature and modern variety shows, and the form is relatively novel. The purpose of this series is to introduce China's rich cultural heritage to the international audience in an interesting and ornamental way. Each episode revolves around an ancient Chinese cultural classic, covering a wide range of text types, from ancient literature to modern classics. The program not only shows the ideological depth, moral instructions, historical background and universal themes in these works, but also vividly presents the connotation of traditional Chinese literature with the help of music, dance, comedy skits, games, interactive links and other creative means, so that audiences from different cultural backgrounds can also produce Empathetic or understanding.

*China in the Classics* focuses on the excellent Chinese cultural classics, selects the most outstanding traditional cultural works worth telling, and tells the formation, core ideas and shining stories in the circulation of the classics in the way of "cultural programs + dramas + films", so that the words written in the classics can "come alive" and show the Chinese wisdom, Chinese spirit and Chinese values contained in the classics.

Relying on the cultural IP of classics, the program has found a new way to grasp the core of the classics, string the "pearls" into a cultural chain, build a profound, comprehensive and insightful historical picture of cultural communication and exchange, and explore the vein of Chinese civilization. The program sets

up two fields of "historical space" and "real space". In the historical space, film and television shooting techniques are used to intuitively present the stories in the classics, and creative techniques are used to make the traditional classics "alive" on the screen.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Foreign Researches

Despite originating in China, Eco-translatology was initially inspired by Darwin's principle of "adaptation and selection" and rooted in Western ecological concepts.

During the mid-19th century, the scientific publication *Origin of Species* by a British naturalist was released, which put forward the idea of species evolution and the theory of "adaptation and selection" reflecting the interaction between environment and organisms. (Darwin Charles, 1859)

Subsequently, the international translation community began to discuss translation from the perspective of Eco-translatology. Under the continuous discussion of famous western translation scholars such as Peter Newmark, David Katan, and Susan Bassnett, the viewpoint of translation ecology was obtained.

In modern times, the book *Translation and Globalization* (Cronin Michael, 2003) puts forward the need to pay attention to ecological translation.

Meanwhile, the translation of poetry has been examined through the lens of Eco-translatology, which argues that Eco-translatology is not solely concerned with translating texts that are explicitly ecological according to ecological criticism, but instead focuses on enhancing the reader's ecological consciousness through the translation of any text. (Clive Scott, 2015)

Furthermore, language translation and food have been analogized in favor of building a new translation ecosystem. (Cronin, 2015)

The book *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene* (Cronin Michael, 2017) discusses the internal relationship between translation and ecology.

### 2.2 Domestic Researches

As a native translation theory, Eco-translatology has been developing rapidly in China for more than 20 years. Drawing from Darwin's theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, as well as modern Western translation studies and ancient Eastern ecological wisdom, Professor Hu Gengshen of Tsinghua University (2004) put forward the translation concept of translator-centered in *Translation Adaptive Selection Theory*, and elaborated on the principles of multi-dimensional adaptation and adaptive selection in translation, suggesting that the optimal translation is one that exhibits the highest level of adaptive selection by the translator. Later, he (2009) pointed out that the general idea of the development of Eco-translatology is that under the command and observation of ecology, engage in research and analysis focusing on language, culture, and human communication, which are intricately linked to translation practices, and ultimately circle back to ontological research in translation. This is discussed in the book *Eco-translatology: Interpretation and Construction* authored by Professor Hu (2013) divided the development process of Eco-translatology into three stages. From the perspective of translatology, a

holistic study of translation was carried out. In the 5th International Symposium on Eco-translatology, Professor Hu (2016) presented the system model of Eco-translatology in his speech. And Professor Hu (2019) explained the further deepening and expansion of Eco-translatology, the construction of ecological paradigm, in *The Theoretical Construction of the Ecological Paradigm of Translation Studies*, which aims to understand translation from an ecological perspective.

After the 20th century, more and more scholars in China began to be interested in this new theory. In terms of research topics, Chinese scholars often use the concept of ecological translation in translation or teaching practice, which revolves more around the practical application of this theory. Specifically, they will analyze the characteristics and gains and losses of the translation from the three dimensions of language, culture and communication, so as to support the view of "multidimensional adaptation and adaptive selection".

However, there is a shortcoming in the current domestic ecological translation research, that is, it is not enough to examine the results of ecological translation from the perspective of ecological criticism (Miao Fuguang, 2014). In addition, there are also some problems in discussing ecological translation research from the perspective of "real reference" (Chen Yuehong, 2016).

None of these studies cover the subtitle ecological translation of typical Chinese cultural programs. What this article wants to further explore is how translators apply the theory of ecological translation when translating subtitles of cultural variety shows.

### **3. The Translation Eco-environment of *China in the Classics***

#### *3.1 Linguistic Features of China in the Classics*

The cultural TV program *China in the Classics* takes China's excellent classics as the object of expression, adopts ancient and modern space-time dialogue as the main structural mode, integrates immersive drama, expert interviews and other expression techniques, and presents the specific connotation of Chinese civilization carried in the classics. The program shows the development vein of Chinese civilization and its importance, and also presents the touching stories of the characters behind the classics, so that the audience can feel the depth and richness of Chinese culture through these classic works.

The linguistic features of *China in the Classics* are as follows:

A large number of poems and proverbs are used in the text, which has a strong romantic color, which enhances the beauty of the language, and can also attract the audience and create the atmosphere of the scene. In addition, the text also adds cultural connotation and charm, adding beauty to the language of historical stage plays. For example:

(ST: Source Text; TT: Target Text.)

ST: 撒贝宁：工欲善其事，必先利其器。

TT: "a workman must first sharpen his tools if he is to do his work well"?

ST: 学生：学而时习之，不亦说乎，有朋自远方来，不亦乐乎。

TT: "Isn't it a pleasure to study and practice what you have learned? Isn't it also great when friends visit

from distant places?"

Second, on the linguistic level, it uses many historical allusions, which not only plays a very good rhetorical effect, looks both elegant and funny and subtle, can make the language more concise, concise and far-reaching, and at the same time, it also promotes the famous events in the history of China, which attracts the interest of the audience! For example:

ST: 秦时起焚书坑儒，天下书大都毁之。

TT: During the Qin dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), "destruction of books and burial of scholars" happened, and most of the copies of the *Book of Documents* were ruined.

Third, its language is in the form of dialogues, so that the audience can understand the storyline more easily, be better immersed in the situation, and be brought into the role, so as to produce empathy. For example:

ST: 周武王：本大王率西土诸侯联军出征，为救民于水火

TT: We heard Your Majesty is saving people from the abyss of sufferings.

ST: 当地百姓：我等特协族人前来相助

TT: We've come to help you.

### 3.2 Cultural Features of China in the Classics

First, *The China in the Classics* reflects the rich cultural heritage of China, encompassing different facets including philosophy, history, literature, and ethics. For example:

ST: 黄河水自此奔流而下，灌溉良田，这就是大禹治水之法。

TT: The Yellow River runs down from here to irrigate the good land, and this is how Dayu ruled the water.

Second, Traditional Chinese values and beliefs, such as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, are often found in it, shaping the moral and ethical principles highlighted in the texts. For example:

ST: 撒贝宁：夫子及诸位的思想学说在后世被称为儒学，影响深远。

TT: The school of the thoughts of the Master and you gentlemen is called Confucianism.

Third, the narratives and anecdotes in *China in the Classics* can often reflect the social and cultural customs of ancient China, which provides a useful perspective for understanding the customs, traditions and social structure of that era. The program often uses symbolic and allegory techniques to convey profound ideas and moral lessons, which also reflects the weight of symbolic techniques in Chinese culture. For example:

ST: 撒贝宁：后来您求取功名，21岁中举人，28岁中进士，踏上了仕途。

TT: Later, you took the imperial examination. At the age of 21, you passed the provincial-level exam. At 28, you passed the highest-level exam and embarked on an official career.

### 3.3 Communicative Features of China in the Classics

First, *China in the Classics* acts as a medium for the transmission of knowledge and wisdom from generation to generation, highlighting the importance of education and intellectual development. The text often encourages the audience to carry out self-reflection and self-improvement, and promote personal

growth and moral cultivation. It also often uses rhetorical skills and persuasion to attract the audience in order to convey the message more effectively. For example:

ST: 周武王：本大王率西土诸侯联军出征，为救民于水火。

TT: We heard Your Majesty is saving people from the abyss of sufferings.

In addition, the use of storytelling and narrative skills in *China in the Classics* helps to establish an emotional connection with the audience, and can also make the content more intimate and easier to remember. It usually emphasizes the value of harmony, whether in interpersonal relationships or in the whole society, it conveys the concept of balance and unity. For example:

ST: 伏胜：大禹当年把天下田地覆水分九等，一等最高，九等最低。

TT: "In the year of Dayu, the world's fields were divided into nine classes, with the first class being the highest and the ninth class being the lowest."

#### 4. Subtitle Translation of *China in the Classics* from Three-dimensional Transformation

In the study of ecological translation, translators need to make adjustments and decisions in the translation environment. The English subtitles of *China in the Classics* are mainly aimed at foreign friends who are interested in Chinese culture or want to learn Chinese culture in depth. Therefore, the translation must be accurate and faithful, and at the same time adapt to the multiple levels of ecological translation. Starting from the three-dimensional perspective of ecological translation, this article analyzes the English subtitles of *China in the Classics*, explores how translators can adapt to the ecological context, choose appropriate translation strategies, and maintain a multi-dimensional ecological balance in translation.

This section will discuss how ecological translation is applied to the subtitle translation of *China in the Classics* from the three dimensions of language, culture and communication. In order to cope with different types of problems and ensure that the target audience can understand the translated content, translators use a variety of translation strategies, skills and abilities.

##### 4.1 The Adaptive Transformation from the Linguistic Dimension

ST: 陛下吩咐，长者可免于行礼。

TT: Listen to the edict. Command from your majesty, the elderly may not have to kowtow.

“礼” refers to the behavior of ancient subjects who respected the emperor, that is, they should kneel down when they see the emperor and when they receive the order. In English, it can be treated as "rite" in a literal translation. However, the literal translation cannot accurately convey the etiquette and awe of the ancient Chinese subjects for the emperor. Because the lexical meaning of the ecological environment of the source language and the ecological environment of the target language is not equal, the translator chose the interpretation, and the English subtitles translated "rite" into "kowtow" to adapt to the target ecology. "Kowtow" is a traditional Chinese etiquette, which means bending deeply and touching the ground with the forehead to show respect or obedience. This kind of language-level adjustment helps to make adaptive choices and complete the conversion of language dimensions.

ST: 汉文帝年间，陛下遍求天下能讲尚书之人。

TT: Emperor-Wen of Han sought individuals capable of lecturing on the *Book of Documents*.

“讲” refers to teach and explain *the Book of Documents*. If it is translated literally in English, it will be translated into “speak”. In that case, the whole sentence will be misunderstood. Thus, the translator opts for a free translation to render the term “讲” as “lecturing” in order to adjust to the target ecological environment. The “lecturing” in this context means to teach, so it is more adaptable. This linguistic adjustment facilitates adaptive choices and allows for the completion of the linguistic dimension shift.

ST: 学生：治水。

TT: He was controlling the floods.

“治” in the subtitle “治水” in the subtitle means to control water conservancy and dredge the river to avoid water hazards. The translation of “cure” is related to the story of Dayu Zhishui in ancient times. Dayu was the first leader in Chinese history to successfully control the flood. He changed the previous method of simply blocking the water and changed to the method of dredging. His spirit of controlling the flood for thirteen years and passing through the house three times without entering is still praised. If you use a literal translation, it can be translated as “manage”. But the literal translation cannot accurately express the original meaning. Therefore, the author translates it as “control”, because this word contains the meaning of dredging and governance, which is more appropriate.

ST: 伏胜：中途遭遇兵劫。

TT: On the way, we were caught up in a war.

“兵劫” refers to ancient wars. The literal translation can be translated as “rob”. But it's wrong to turn it like this. When foreign audiences watch it, they can't deeply feel the difficulties and dangers faced by the protagonist in the process of protecting the book. In the English subtitles, “兵劫” is translated as “war”. This translation successfully realizes the conversion from the language dimension, and also accurately conveys the semantics, making the translation fluent and natural.

ST: 周武王：所以，我军必胜。

TT: Therefore, the victory must be ours.

“胜” is the last verb in the original text, which strengthens the belief in victory. But in English, the focus often falls on the subject. The difference in the emphasis of the ecological environment of the source language and the target language may lead to an imbalance in the language dimension. Therefore, in this context, the translator converts verbs into nouns in order to highlight the belief in victory in the translation, which also takes into account the role that the communication dimension usually plays.

ST: 学生：砍削树木作为路标，以高山大河奠定界域。

TT: He cut down the trees for road signs. He used high hills and large rivers as boundaries.

The Chinese line in the example omits the subject. In English, sentences without subject are considered incomplete. Therefore, the translator chooses to add the subject to the English subtitles to ensure the complete conversion of the language dimension. In this example, the implicit subject of the sentence is “

大禹". Therefore, the translator chose the pronoun "he" as the subject to maintain the balance between the components of the sentence in the translation ecological environment.

ST: 九年未见其功，顺流放我父亲治禹山。

TT: Since my father didn't improve the situation, he was exiled. Then I was sent here to control the waters. The syntax of Chinese is mainly based on the meaning, while the English is more inclined to the form. In English, the subject structure is usually the basis of the sentence. The verb is located in the predicate position and is connected through various means of connection such as participles, prepositions, conjunctions and relative pronouns. In contrast, there is no obvious sign in the Chinese example, and the connection between sentences mainly depends on the inherent semantic coherence. In English subtitles, the "since" at the beginning is used to explain the implicit causal relationship of the sentence, and the following preposition is used to establish the coherence between sentences and highlight the structural connection.

ST: 撒贝宁：我国人当把此国宝守好护好。

TT: We should keep these national treasures in a good state of preservation!

Repetition is a common phenomenon in Chinese, while English expressions tend to reduce redundancy. In the example, "guard well" and "protect well" are synonymous, but only "preservation" is used in the translation to avoid repeated expressions with the same meaning. The translator adapted well to the translation context and adjusted the syntactic structure and word use to make it in line with English language habits.

#### *4.2 The Adaptive Transformation Analysis from the Cultural Dimension*

In terms of the cultural dimension, the usual modes of translation include phonetic translation, paraphrasing, extension, annotation, naturalization, and so on.

In the process of translation, the translator will strategically choose the cultural dimension, focusing on conveying and interpreting the cultural connotation in bilingualism. This adaptive approach means acknowledging that there are essential and content differences between the source language culture and the target language culture, rather than just focusing on the target language. Translators need to realize that the source language culture and the target language culture are different in nature and content, so as to avoid misreading from the perspective of the target culture. When translating the source text, translators should pay attention to adapt to the whole cultural framework related to the language (Hu Gengshen, 2004). In the process of translation, translators should pay attention to how to adapt to the complete cultural system that accompanies language.

When translating Chinese cultural content, the process itself includes the integration of culture, because each language reflects its own different cultural systems. Due to the diverse background of the audience, translators need to carefully consider the subtle cultural differences between Chinese and English, find a better balance between the cultural dimensions of the two languages, and promote the harmony of cultural dimensions.

ST: “修身，齐家，治国，平天下。”

TT: Cultivate one's moral character, regulate the family, rule the country, and pacify the world.

This famous saying "修身，齐家，治国，平天下" comes from the Book of Rituals. "修身" refers to improving oneself and behavior with rules. The "齐家" refers to managing the family well, setting an example for the people in the clan, and setting an example worthy of others to follow and learn from. "治国" does not refer to the country in our modern sense, but to govern a small vassal state. To understand this, the ancient vassal state was responsible to the Zhou royal family, which is usually called the "state". The expression of "平天下" means to stabilize the people through harmony and prosperity, not by coercion. The core idea of the whole sentence is that self-cultivation is fundamental, and then we can effectively govern the family and the country, and finally make the world peaceful.

In this example, if literal translation is adopted, it may be difficult for readers to understand the true meaning of the original text. Therefore, the translator chose the strategy of interpretation to convey the core meaning of this sentence in the English version. This sentence contains strong Chinese cultural elements. When translating, it is adapted according to the needs of different cultural information. Through the technique of amentative translation, the translation not only accurately conveys the meaning of the original text, but also effectively conveys the cultural connotation. The English translation here shows the adaptive choices made by the cultural dimension in the process of conversion very well.

ST: 秦时起焚书坑儒，天下书大都毁之。

TT: During the Qin dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), “destruction of books and burial of scholars” happened, and most of the copies of the *Book of Documents* were ruined.

“秦时起焚书坑儒” refers to a historical event in ancient China when Emperor Qin Shi Huang burned books and killed "more than 460 offenders" in 213 and 212 BC.

This example chose the extension method. Extension in translation refers to extending the meaning of the original text to meet the requirements of expression and context within the translation environment.

ST: 撒贝宁: 君不见黄河之水天上来，奔流到海不复回。

TT: Have you not noticed that the Yellow River originates from the sky? It was Yu the Great who made it possible for the Yellow River to bring benefits to the people.

This text comes from Li Bai's poem "General Wine", which conveys the meaning of "the water of the Yellow River rises from the sky and flows to the sea and never returns". In this context, the translator used interpretation to express that Dayu sought the welfare of the people through the Yellow River.

ST: 伏胜: 恭送晁掌故。

TT: See you, Master (of ceremonies) Chao.

In this context, “掌故” here refers to the title of the official position responsible for managing the etiquette and music system during the Han Dynasty, which is also a respectful title of Fusheng for Chao Chao's official rank. It is closely related to ancient Chinese culture, and there are no directly corresponding words in English. Therefore, the translator chose the method of literal translation plus interpretation and translated it into "master (of ceremonies)", which not only retained the meaning of the

word, but also took into account its cultural significance. This English translation better reflects the adaptive choice of cultural dimensions in the process of conversion.

ST: 我立志做学问, 求师问道, 修习六艺。

TT: I aspire to be a scholar, to seek a teacher, to cultivate myself in the six practical disciplines, including courtesy, music, archery, riding, writing and math.

“六艺” refer to etiquette, music, shooting, imperial, calligraphy and mathematics, that is, the six skills in the aristocratic education system of the Zhou Dynasty in China, including etiquette, music, archery and horseback riding skills, driving skills, calligraphy and arithmetic. In order to help foreign audiences understand the "six arts", the translator used the strategy of add translation. By combining the translation language and cultural background, the translator effectively conveys the deeper cultural meaning behind the "six arts" to the target language readers. This practice not only eliminates the doubts and confusion that readers may have, but also enhances their sense of reading participation, so as to achieve smoother cross-cultural communication.

ST: 撒贝宁: 后来您求取功名, 21岁中举人, 28岁中进士, 踏上了仕途。

TT: Later, you took the imperial examination. At the age of 21, you passed the provincial-level exam. At 28, you passed the highest-level exam and embarked on an official career.

The imperial examination system is an ancient Chinese examination system for selecting officials. Under the imperial examination system, talents were selected by holding various examinations to ensure that the selection of government officials was fair and just. The imperial examination system helped to select outstanding talents, improve the quality and capacity of the government, and promote the development and progress of society. The title of "举人" is an official rank in the ancient Chinese imperial examination system. In the imperial examination, after passing a series of tests, candidates with excellent results were awarded the title of "举人", which meant that they were recognised as talents qualified to hold official positions. In the sequence of official ranks, "举人" is located above Zhusheng, and is one of the important official ranks in the imperial examination system. “进士” is one of the highest ranks of officials in the ancient Chinese imperial examination system. In the imperial examinations, after passing a series of tests, the candidates with the best results were awarded the title of “进士”, which means that they were recognized as qualified to hold senior official positions. “进士” is the highest level of examination and title in the imperial examination system, and is located above the “举人”. The title of “进士” was one of the highest honors for officials in ancient China, with high social status and power..

Considering the cultural level, the translator chose the naturalization strategy, not simply to translate the text directly, but to explain the meaning of the sentence to facilitate the understanding of the translated readers. The translator has strong ability and understands the cultural differences between the source language and the target language, which can ensure that the original information is accurately conveyed without loss.

#### *4.3 The Adaptive Transformation from the Communicative Dimension*

In terms of the communicative dimension, the usual methods of translation include free translation,

paraphrasing, annotation and so on.

Through adaptive selection, the transformation of the communication dimension is realized, that is, the translator pays attention to the adaptation and conversion of the intention of bilingual communication in the translation process (Hu Gengshen, 2008). The key to the transformation of the communication dimension is to judge whether the translation effectively achieves the purpose of communication, that is, whether the translator has successfully completed the communication intention in the translation process. In other words, when translating, translators should not only convey the information and cultural connotation of the source language, but also pay attention to the communication level.

ST: 王阳明: 我那时是初生牛犊不怕虎啊。

TT: At that time, I knew nothing, so I feared nothing.

Whether in ancient or present, Chinese people always like to quote some traditional sayings to express their thoughts and feelings when talking. In the example sentence, the proverb "初生牛犊不怕虎" is quoted, which means that the newborn calf is not afraid of the tiger, which is a metaphor for young people who have less worries and dare to do things.

When translating these characteristic proverbs, if the translator simply translates them word by word, the foreigners will not know what is going on and will cause difficulties in understanding. Therefore, the example 16 selects paraphrase in the translation. Paraphrasing involves a technique known as implicit supplementation, where the translation is enriched by directly providing the omitted details and elucidating essential information. Cultural discrepancies will impact the conveyance of communicative intent. In order to maintain ecological balance, the translator chooses to rephrase it as "I knew nothing, so I feared nothing".

ST: 周武王: 本大王率西土诸侯联军出征, 为救民于水火。

TT: We heard Your Majesty is saving people from the abyss of sufferings.

ST: 学生: 夫子, 我们四处碰壁。

TT: We encountered many difficulties.

In this example, "水火" does not refer to the two literal elements of water and fire in daily life, but is used as a metaphor for a difficult and dangerous situation. Therefore, it cannot be literally translated as water and fire. It should be understood according to the context. The meaning of this sentence is that the monarch is ready to lead an army to rescue the people from trouble. "碰壁" is the same as an example. It can be seen from the context that it means that they have encountered obstacles. Literal translation may cause readers to be confused. In order to avoid ambiguity, the translator adopted the appropriate interpretation in the English version to reflect the communication intention of the original text in the translation.

ST: 撒贝宁: 我们还读到了忠恕之道。

TT: We also learned the principle of "shu"(reciprocity and forbearance).

“忠恕之道” is a category of Chinese Confucian ethics and philosophy, and it is also the only principle that Confucius is considered to run through. "恕" means doing your best for others; “忠恕之道” means

pushing yourself and others. The way of loyalty and forgiveness means to compare one's heart and push oneself to others.

If a translator opts for a literal translation, non-native speakers may struggle to grasp the intended meaning, resulting in a failure to achieve effective communication. To better convey the program's message and communicative impact, the true essence of "忠恕之道" is elucidated in the subtitle translation, preserving a harmonious communicative balance between the original and target languages.

## 5. Conclusion

Guided by Hu Gengshen's ecological translation theory, this article uses the three-dimensional conversion principle of ecological translation to examine the English subtitle translation of *China in the Classics* and its adaptive choice in three dimensions. The study explores the changes in the effect of three-dimensional conversion methods on subtitle translation, and has some insights for future translation practice and research. The paper first explores the concept of ecological translation, sorts out the complex connotations, clarifies the core essence and basic elements of ecological translation, and focuses on the three-dimensional transformation in ecological translation. After that, the language, culture and communication characteristics that affect the translation ecological environment of China in the Classics were analyzed. Finally, taking *China in the Classics* as a case, the translation process is examined and discussed from the perspective of ecological translation theory.

Under the background of globalization, the use of new media platforms to make a statement is becoming increasingly important in the construction of China's cultural communication system to the outside world, and historical stage dramas also play an important role in the construction of an all-round communication pattern. However, "to do a good job, one must first make good use of its tools", and stage plays, as one of the important vehicles for foreign propaganda, must ensure the quality of translation. The widespread acclaim of *China in the Classics* both domestically and internationally can be attributed to the exceptional quality of subtitle translations. The translators have made adaptive choices of conversion from the perspectives of linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions, realizing multi-dimensional adaptation, which plays an inestimable role in promoting Chinese historical stories and traditional culture to foreign countries, and also provides reference for China's foreign propaganda in the future, which helps advance the propagation of Chinese culture to global audiences, and enhancing the nation's cultural self-confidence.

High-quality subtitle translation can promote the wide dissemination of stage plays. Professor Hu Gengshen's theory of ecological translation provides a new theoretical perspective and idea for the study of subtitle translation in documentary films, and translators need to adjust to the intricate translation ecosystem of the source and translation languages in order to achieve the conversion of linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions.

There are still many things that can be improved in this paper. The field of ecological translation itself is still developing continuously, and the author's grasp of the theory is not comprehensive and in-depth

enough. There is also room for improvement in the practical application of theory. In addition, due to the author's limited understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures, the analysis at the cultural level is not complete enough.

In a word, this paper is just a preliminary attempt to analyze *China in the Classics* from the theoretical perspective of ecological translation, hoping to provide a little new ideas for the translation of foreign subtitles of Chinese programs.

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