

Original Paper

International Publicity Translation Based on the Perspective of Eugene Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory: A Case Study of 2022 Government Work Report

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Abstract

The Government Work Report delivered by Premier Li during the Two Sessions in 2022 is an authoritative summary and future outlook of China's economic, social, cultural and diplomatic development in the past year, which has attracted wide and high attention from the international community. As an official state document, the Government Work Report is highly authoritative. Therefore, when translating the report into English, translators are supposed to strictly follow the principles of publicity translation on the premise of profoundly grasping the content of the report, so as to accurately convey the content and meanings of the report to foreign readers and spread the positive voice of China. After careful study and comparison, Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory plays a pivotal role in the publicity translation strategy. Taking the 2022 Government Work Report as the research object, this paper analyzes the English version of the report from three levels of lexicality, syntax and discourse from the perspective of Functional Equivalence Theory, then discusses the skills and strategies of publicity translation, so as to provide useful reference for China's publicity translation.

Keywords

Functional Equivalence Theory, Publicity Translation, English Version of 2022 Government Work Report

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Since the reform and opening up, China's comprehensive national strength has grown significantly. Additionally, China has been playing an increasingly vital role in the international community.

Therefore, China has become connected with other countries in various aspects. Against the backdrop of world multi-polarization, the importance of more effective international exchanges has become evident as well. The international community wants to understand China's current policies. On the other hand, China is eager for the world to have a more comprehensive and specific understanding of its national and social conditions, so as to provide a favorable external environment for her high-quality and sustainable development. The *Government Work Report* is one of the best mediums to spread China's voice. As an official document written by the state administration, the *Government Work Report* is a legal procedure within the Chinese system, covering economic, social, cultural and diplomatic developments, and is an important way for the international community to get a better understanding of China. However, due to its own textual peculiarities, the translation of the *Government Work Report* is a complex issue: on the one hand, the *Government Work Report* made by the Premier of the State Council every spring will put forward many proper nouns and concepts, which makes it difficult to match the corresponding vocabulary in the process of English translation. Hence, it requires the translator to carefully consider the content of the text and express it in the official language; on the other hand, the *Government Work Report*, as an official document, is highly authoritative, so the accuracy of the translation must be extremely demanding, and a slight error in the English translation will lead to great misunderstanding.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The textual language of the *Chinese Government Work Report* is highly standardized, so it is of academic and practical significance to analyze the English translation of *2022 Government Work Report* from the view of Functional Equivalence Theory. The following is the main research significance of this thesis:

- (1) Explore Chinese-English translation methods with Chinese characteristics in the view of Functional Equivalence Theory.
- (2) The *2022 Government Work Report* is one of the important channels for the international community to better understand China's diplomatic policy and national conditions. This thesis provides a new perspective for China's publicity translation strategy.
- (3) The thesis expands the research field of Functional Equivalence Theory and provides reliable references for other related researchers to better understand Functional Equivalence Theory.
- (4) The thesis aims to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the translated version of *Government Work Report* from theoretical perspectives.

2. Eugene A. Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Eugene A. Nida

Eugene A. Nida is a remarkable translator and theorist, famous for his Functional Equivalence Theory. Born in 1914 in Oklahoma City, USA, he graduated from the University of California in 1936. In his early years, he studied with linguists such as Leonard Bloomfield, master of contemporary structuralist

linguists. After graduation, he worked for American Bible Society and devoted his life to the study of Bible translation and related translation theory. Moreover, he is widely regarded as one of the major founders of contemporary theoretical framework of translation.

Nida's erudite, delicate and prolific writings make himself famous around the world. More than 40 his books and 250 of his treaties have been published, both individually and jointly. Furthermore, he also wrote 13 reference books devoted to Biblical translators. Besides, his representative works include *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969), *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964), *Language Structure and Translation: Essays* (1975), *From One Language to Another* (1986) and *Language and Culture: Contexts in Translating* (2001). Nida's fruitful academic achievements are inseparable from his dedication, continuous exploration and spirit of pursuing truth from facts.

Just as Nida dedicated his whole life to the translation of Bible, he was equipped with an integrated translation strategy. He claims that "translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (Nida, 1969, p. 12). On the basis of his definition, Nida put more emphasis on reproducing the meaning in the original text, then on the form. The channel receptivity of ordinary translation readers is much less than that of original readers. This is especially evident if the source and target languages belong to two different language cultures and families. There's a contradiction between content meanings and form to some extent. It's difficult to find balance between them, but form must give way to content meaning. Thus, in the following research, it is necessary to put more emphasis on content meaning in the process of translating procedures.

2.2 Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory

In order to create a specific standard for the translation process between the source language and the target language, as well as to reduce the cultural understanding differences of the readers, basing on the perspective of the nature of translation and linguistics, Nida proposed "Functional Equivalence Theory". In simple terms, Functional Equivalence Theory is proposed to make the translated text and the source language text equivalent in language function, rather than in language form (Ye, 2005, p. 117). To achieve functional equivalence (by equivalence Nida means approximate equivalence), it is of necessity to clarify what functional equivalence is. Nida classifies the functions of language into nine categories in *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating*: expressive, cognitive, interpersonal, informative, imperative, performative, emotive, aesthetic and metalingual (Nida, 1986, p. 25). Nida claimed that to achieve the aforementioned functional equivalence, translators cannot be limited to the text itself, but the effect of equivalence depends on the psychological response of the readers. In other words, the object of mutual reference is the text itself, but it is the target language readers who have the right to determine whether the translated text is equivalent or not.

In addition, Nida deems that translation is not only about lexical equivalence, but also about stylistic and semantic equivalence, and that the information conveyed by a translated text should be equipped with both shallow lexical and deep cultural information. The equivalence in "dynamic equivalence" is

classified into four respects: 1) lexical equivalence; 2) syntactic equivalence; 3) textual equivalence; 4) stylistic equivalence. Nida argues that “first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (Nida, 1969, p. 12) among these four respects. The adherence to form tends to distort the cultural connotations of the source text and hinder cultural exchange.

Through the integration and review of Nida’s Functional equivalence theory, We find that the core of Functional Equivalence Theory is the psychological response of the readers. In order to achieve the equivalence of text meaning, the form can be altered, no matter what the style of the translated text is. Therefore, Functional Equivalence Theory is especially proper for the translation of publicity materials. When a literal translation tends to cause misunderstanding of the original meaning, or the translation is difficult to make readers understood syntactically and semantically, or the translation even makes no sense at all, Nida deems that “translators shall make some changes to the translation, or add footnotes to make explanation if forms are required to be retained” (Nida, 1964, p. 56). Therefore, in the process of translating publicity materials such as the *Government Work Report*, translators are supposed to follow Nida’s Functional Equivalence Theory and regard the four respects of functional equivalence as the translating principles to reproduce the cultural connotation of the source language text accurately in order that we can better spread the positive voice of China.

3. International Publicity and Its Translation

3.1 Definition and Connotation of International Publicity

International publicity translation is one of the most important way to publicize our national conditions and diplomatic policy. In addition, it is also the key point of constructing our discourse system and establishing our national image. Under the background of globalization, the effect of international publicity translation is directly related to China’s international publicity. Therefore, it is of prominently practical significance for this thesis to explore China’s international publicity translation.

Basing on the perspective of communication, Huang Youyi was the first to analyze and discuss the definition of international publicity translation. He pointed out that in the national level of publicity, the most important purpose is how translators translate Chinese into the most appropriate foreign languages and actively promote Chinese position and positive views with the help of various media (such as books, Internet, TV, radio, newspapers and so on.) and international conferences (Huang, 2004, p. 27). In addition, he not only proposed the definition of international publicity translation, but also focused on the translator’s unique role in the process of international publicity translation.

Both external publicity and internal publicity are professional terms with Chinese characteristics. According to Zhu Yihua, external publicity can be divided into broad and narrow concepts. The broad concept refers to “information dissemination, communication activities, interpretation and persuasion of ideas and beliefs carried out by governments, enterprises and public institutions at all levels in China for audiences outside the administrative division or the system according to work needs”, while in a narrow sense, the concept refers to “the publicity of government departments at all levels and all walks

of life to overseas countries in terms of the information dissemination, communication, or ideological interpretation and persuasion outside mainland China” (Zhu, 2013, p. 4). In this thesis, international publicity refers to the narrow sense of external publicity activities, whose purpose is to make overseas people who are different from domestic audience in terms of ideology, thinking mode and value system better understand China’s diplomatic policies and national conditions.

3.2 Previous Studies on International Publicity Translation

In previous studies, the research on international publicity translation mainly consists of the following two aspects: the ontology of international publicity translation, the strategies and techniques of international publicity translation.

Ontological studies of international publicity translation mainly include researches on the definition, content, features, principles and requirements of it. Professor Zhang Jian of Shanghai International Studies University was the first to comb out the theoretical framework of international publicity. He focused on the main characteristics, basic principles and translation strategies of international publicity translation, applied translation and intercultural communication in *Introduction to Translation in China’s Global Communication* (Zhang, 2013, p. 16). This book summarizes the professional qualities translators should be equipped with and analyzes the problems and causes of international publicity translation. With strong logic, the book systematically combs and analyzes the international publicity translation through the combination of theory and practice, and is regarded as the pioneering work of international publicity translation by the domestic academic circle. Therefore, the ontological study of international publicity translation establishes the research framework from a macroscopic perspective and guides the way for Chinese international publicity translation work.

However, Zhang Jian deems that “International publicity translation is a social practice with a strong purpose, the pursuit of effectiveness and timeliness, which determines that the realization of its purpose must be based on certain principles” (Zhang, 2013, p. 24). Now here comes the study on the strategies and techniques of international publicity translation, which mainly consists of discussion and summary of translation methods and writing techniques. Huang Youyi elaborated that in addition to following the standards of “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance”, international publicity translation should also consider “three principle of adherence in publicity-oriented translation” (Huang, 2004, p. 27), which means being closer to the reality of China’s development, being closer to the target audience’s needs of information from China, and being closer to the target audience’s thinking patterns. Definitely, sometimes there is a contradiction between “being closer to the reality of China’s development” and “being closer to overseas audience”, just as the contradiction between “formal equivalence” and “functional equivalence”. Therefore, translators are supposed to coordinate according to gains and losses, which requires the translator to pay attention to the study of exotic cultures and foreigner’s mental thinking mode, be adept in discovering the subtle differences between Chinese culture and exotic cultures, and always remember to grasp the translation according to the thinking mode of overseas audience.

An eminent international publicity translation is not to convert Chinese characters into foreign languages mechanically, but to approximately revise the original Chinese text, sometimes to delete, and sometimes to add cultural background. In short, it is important not only to make overseas audience understand, but also to get them as receptive as possible.

4. Stylistic Features of *Government Work Report*

Stylistics hasn't become popular until Halliday began to apply stylistics to translation studies in the early 1960s (Guo, 2009, p. 27). The preferred object of stylistics is literature, but it is not limited to "pure literature", but also includes other forms of texts, such as popular culture, advertising, religion and politics. Stylistics is the study of literary genres. In a broad sense, stylistics studies the phonological, lexical, syntactic and discourse features of various text types. In a narrow sense, stylistics studies the linguistic features and styles of literary genres (e.g., poetry, fiction, prose and so on.). However, just as mentioned before, stylistics is not limited to that, but includes any linguistic variant in use, such as daily dialogue, speech, advertising, political discourse, news reporting, business letters, legal documents, scientific and technical reports, and diplomatic documents. To put it simply, stylistics studies the law of language use, that is, how phonology, vocabulary, grammar and rhetorical devices are used in specific contexts. The stylistic study of *Government Work Report* allows us for a better examination of the characteristics of this genre.

The original stylistic features of the text in the translation process is supposed to be maintained as far as possible. Hence, the translator should strive to maintain the style and connotation of the original text in the translation in order to produce an equivalent effect in the translation. To achieve that goal, in the translation process of the *Government Work Report*, the translation should study the stylistic features of it. Therefore, the stylistic features of *Government Work Report* will be explored from the following two respects: lexical, syntactic.

4.1 Lexical Level

The most prominent feature of the lexical features of *Government Work Report* is that the words are formal and rigorous. Instead of repeating redundantly, the information should be conveyed to the audience in a concise and clear form. Unlike other genres of texts, the *Government Work Report*, as an official document at the national level, has lofty solemnity and authority. Therefore, the whole content of the report should be expressed in plain and concise language as far as possible to make it easier for deputies and the public to understand and accept.

4.1.1 Acronym

Frequent use of acronyms and abbreviations is one of the salient features of *Government Work Report*. Simple abbreviations contain social phenomena, cultural knowledge and other aspects, and their connotations are more complex than ordinary words. The acronyms in *Government Work Report* are concise and comprehensive, but they are encyclopedic in nature, involving social, cultural, historical

and other aspects of knowledge. In the *2022 Government Work Report*, there are many acronyms which are familiar to us Chinese. For instance:

Example 1: 扎实做好“六稳、六保”工作。

Example 2: 坚持和完善社会主义基本经济制度，坚持“两个毫不动摇”。

The acronyms in the examples are both the policies and spirits implemented by the government. Thereinto, to avoid lengthiness, the English version of “六稳、六保” in the report is “to ensure stability on six key fronts and security in six key areas”. Specifically, it refers to ensuring stability in employment, the financial sector, domestic investment, foreign investment, foreign trade, and expectations and ensuring security in job, basic living needs, food and energy security, operations of market entities, stable industrial and supply chains, and the normal functioning of primary-level government. In addition, the English version of “两个毫不动摇” is “to consolidate and develop the public sector and to encourage, support and guide development of the non-public sector. Acronyms appears in the report frequently, only translators understand their content can they translate the original connotations.

4.1.2 Neologism

The proliferation of neologisms is another notable feature of *Government Work Report*. A neologism is a new word or phrase in a language, or a new meaning of an existing word or phrase. Since the reform and opening up, China has constantly composed a new chapter of development. In the process of development, lots of new words, which is the side expression of the implementation of the new policy and the epitome of the transformation of our people’s way of thinking and lifestyle, are emerging in the *Government Work Report*.

New words and phrases are widely employed in the *Government Work Report* in order to better reflect current policies and social conditions and stimulate people’s interest. With the change of China’s national conditions and the continuous development of the economy and society, translation shall also keep pace with times and convey the connotation of new words in the translation process so that the target audience can understand the connotation of the report accurately. For example:

Example 3: 稳字当头、稳中求进

Example 4: 互联网+督查

These two novel words appearing in the report attract broad attention. The meaning of “稳字当头、稳中求进” is to make economic stability our top priority and pursue progress while ensuring stability, which reflects our mentality in developing our own economy. And “互联网+督查” means the Internet plus model of inspection, which is a policy implemented by our government resolutely. Additionally, lots of neologisms appear in the report, which requires translator to explore the deeper implication of them.

4.2 Syntactic Level

In view of different functions, sentences can be classified into the following four types: a) declarative sentence, b) imperative sentence, c) interrogative sentence, d) exclamatory sentence. According to the

relevant research of modern Chinese rhetoric and stylism, in political documents, declarative sentences account for 92.1%, interrogative sentences 3.2%, imperative sentences 2.6% and exclamatory sentences 2.1% (Ji & Qian, 1996). It is apparent that the majority of sentences in political materials are declarative. Furthermore, zero-subject sentences and long sentences appear in political literature frequently in the broad category of declarative sentences.

4.2.1 Zero-subject Sentences

In Chinese, people can leave out the subject when they actually understand the implied meaning of the sentence. This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in the report. The report is a language script designed to address the specific language background and the capacity of the target audience, so it employs simple sentences to convey the intended meaning. Besides, Chinese's emphasis on cohesion means that sentences with more verbs and fewer conjunctions are common in the report. Unlike Chinese, English puts more emphasis on subordination. Therefore, it is of necessity to recognize the language and cultural differences in the translation process and translate the zero-subject sentences by adding corresponding topics. Some zero-subject sentences appearing in *2022 Government Work Report* are as follows:

Example 5: 统筹疫情防控和社会经济发展。

Example 6: 完善民营企业债券融资支持机制，全面实行股票发行注册制。

4.2.2 Long Sentences

Chinese publicity materials contain a large number of long and complicated sentences, which is another syntactic feature of political material. This is related to the fixed feature of Chinese, that is, in a Chinese sentence, there can be multiple predicate verbs, so the content and connotation of the expression will be relatively more complex. Although there are plenty of long sentences in *Government Work Report*, the text is smooth, connected and logical. Therefore, studying the translation of long and complicated sentences in *Government Work Report* is an important link in the aspect of functional equivalence. In addition, the employment of long sentences not only can achieve the purpose of fully explaining the official point of view, but also can effectively promote the solemnity and graveness of official documents. For instance:

Example 7: 加大对受疫情影响严重行业企业信贷投放，继续执行小微企业贷款延期本付息和信用贷款支持政策，银行业金融机构普惠小微企业贷款增长 27.3%，大型商业银行普惠小微企业贷款增幅超过 40%，企业综合融资成本稳中有降。

5. Case Study: The English Translation of *Government Work Report* from the Perspective of Functional Equivalence Theory

Through the former chapter's analysis of Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory and the description of the stylistic features of *Government Work Report*, and given that this theory emphasizes the mental response of the audience and gives priority to the content and connotation of translation, it can be clearly found that in the process of translating the report, referring to and following the Functional

Equivalence Theory is extremely suitable to achieve cultural and functional equivalence between the source language and the target language.

Nida regards that there are different levels of functional equivalence between minimum and maximum translation (Nida, 2001, p. 8), such as equivalence in lexical meaning, phrases, style and content. The equivalence of the meaning expressed by the text is the first priority, while the style is the second. Therefore, translators are supposed to pay attention to the words and phrases with cultural significance in the report, and should not be overly rigid in the style, so as to make the translation understandable to the target audience. In the following part, Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory will be applied to analyze the English version of *Government Work Report* at lexical, syntactic and textual levels.

5.1 Translation on Lexical Level

As a typical government official document, the *Government Work Report* represents the national image. Political documents differ from any other type of writing in two main ways: political sensitivity and the value of weighty words (Xu, 1998, p. 6). These two unique characteristics strictly require translators to have a thorough and accurate understanding of the policies implemented by the government, master domestic and international affairs and carefully convey information to the audience. That is to say, translators should be fastidious in choosing words, or slightly deviated words will cause great trouble.

5.1.1 Translation of Acronyms

Just as mentioned in the previous chapter, acronyms are frequently employed in *Government Work Report*, such as “六稳”, “放管服”, “两个维护” and so on. Many of these acronyms are abbreviated forms of government policies and thoughts. In order to realize the principle of functional equivalence in the translation process, translators must accurately grasp the connotation of those acronyms and present the complete meaning in English version. For instance:

Example 8: 持之以恒纠治“四风”，进一步为基层减负。

English version: We kept up our efforts to tackle pointless formalities, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance, and took further steps to ease the burdens of those working on the ground.

In China's international publicity materials, there are many combined acronyms of “number + noun”, such as “三孩”, “两个确立” and so on. In the above example, “四风” is a typical Chinese acronym, which cannot be directly translated into “four ethos” or “four kinds of atmosphere”. Because foreign readers definitely are not able to understand what “四风” refers to in detail. A literal translation would not only fail to convey the original connotation of the report, but also tends to mislead foreign readers. Therefore, only by translating the specific content of “四风”, namely formalities, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance, can the requirements of foreign readers and the effect of functional equivalence be achieved.

Another example is as follows:

Example 9: 持续推进“放管服”改革。

English version: We will deepen reforms to streamline administration and delegate power, improve regulation, and upgrade services.

“放管服” is short for “简政放权、放管结合、优化服务”. The only three words highly summarizes the three reform contents. “放管服” is not as well known to its target audience as “一带一路”. Since the target language readers are not that familiar with the various systems of China’s current economic reform, if the literal translation is adopted, the target language readers will not be able to understand the proposed policies well through the English version of the report. The published translation expands the acronym and fills in the basic contents contained in the reform, achieving the effect of functional equivalence. What’s more, it is also important to achieve the purpose of communication, that is, to enable the target audience of the English version to understand and appreciate the report as the readers of the source language do.

Of course, not all acronyms have to be translated into their specific connotations, for example:

Example 10: “十四五”实现良好开局。

English version: We got the 14th Five-Year Plan off to a good start.

Example 11: 坚持一个中国原则和“九二共识”。

English version: We remain committed to the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus.

The acronyms “十四五” and “九二共识” in the above two examples are translated in a literal way, without explaining the content contained in them. Because these acronyms have been well known to foreign media and readers, they will not cause misunderstanding even if no interpretation is applied, which is more convenient for the purpose of communication. On the other hand, due to the rich connotations of these acronyms, if the contents are elaborated, the translation will be lengthy, which is not conducive to communication, and the corresponding functional equivalence will be destroyed.

5.1.2 Translation of Neologisms

Like the *Government Work Report* of previous years, some neologisms appear in the *2022 Government Work Report* as well. By translating the new words in Chinese, translators can guide the target audience to think rationally about the changes and development of the country and society by reading these neologisms that coalesce the memories and cultural values of the times. However, due to the emergence of neologisms, translators do not have previous reference materials for translation when translating the report. Therefore, the translator should first understand the connotation of the new words, follow the Functional Equivalence Theory, give priority to the essential connotation of the source language and the readers' response, and translate into an English version the target audience can understand. Here are two examples appearing in *2022 Government Work Report*:

Example 12: 要坚持政府过紧日子, 更好节用裕民。

English version: Government will keep its belt tightened and keep spending low to benefit the people.

In the example sentence, the phrase “节用裕民” is one of the neologisms in the report. In this case, “用” does not mean “utility”, but “spending”; the subject of “裕民” is the central government. Therefore, the translation is not superficially translated as “make people more affluent”. Instead, it is translated as “benefit the people”, which not only deepens its meaning, but also conforms to the expression of the

official document, so that readers can accurately grasp the meaning of the new word. In addition, it is worth mentioning that “过紧日子” is translated as “keep belt tightened”, which is a clever translation with Chinese characteristics, and is often said as “勒紧裤腰带过日子” in daily dialogue. This translation retains the Chinese characteristics, but does not make readers feel abrupt, allowing them to accept and understand this expression, and also achieves functional equivalence to a certain extent.

Example 13: 着力培育“专精特新”企业。

English version: We will work to nurture specialized and sophisticated enterprises.

In the above example sentence, “专精特新”, which is translated into “specialized and sophisticated”, is a typical neologism in the report. If the phrase is translated separately into “specialized, refined, differential and innovative”, the translated version would be lengthy and boring, which is not in line with the authentic English expression. So the translator replaces the latter three adjectives, “精特新”, with one word, “sophisticated”, highly summarizing the overall meaning. Therefore, the word “sophisticated” is used delicately, achieving exact functional equivalence on lexical level in translation.

5.2 Translation on Syntactic Level

The sentence is the basic unit of a text. The syntactic features of *Government Work Report* have been discussed above, and in this part, the translation methods in zero-subject sentences and long and complicated sentences will be analyzed from the perspective of functional equivalence.

5.2.1 Translation of Zero-subject Sentences

One of the syntactic differences between Chinese and English is that Chinese tends to be paratactic, while English is largely hypotactic. Just as discussed in the former chapter, Chinese people can leave out the subject when they actually understand the implied connotation of the sentence. In Chinese, if the corresponding part can be inferred from the text, then any component of the sentences can be omitted, regardless of logic and grammar. So, it is completely not surprising that there are lots of zero-subject sentences in Chinese texts, especially in *Government Work Report*. However, with the exception of imperative sentences, sentences without a subject are considered grammatically incorrect in English. English is concerned with a high degree of grammatical rigor and emphasizes the integrity of sentence components, especially the subject and predicate, which are the main part of the sentence. According to Nida's view, the translation must conform to the grammar of the target language. Therefore, according to the theory of functional equivalence, when translating zero-subject sentences in Chinese *Government Work Report*, the translator should identify the subject of the sentence according to the context, and translate the subject according to English grammar, the set of logical concepts and the habitual thinking of native English speakers. Otherwise, readers of the target language will be confused by the logic of the translation and will not be able to understand the real meaning conveyed by the report. The typical zero-subject sentences in *2022 Government Work Report* are as follows:

Example 14: 有序开展对外投资合作, 有效防范海外风险。

English version: We will carry out outbound investment and international cooperation in a well-regulated way, and effectively guard against overseas risks.

Example 15: 促进教育公平与质量提升。

English version: We will improve the fairness and quality of education.

In the translation of above two sentences, the subject “we” is added, completing the requirement of English structure. There are no subjects in the example sentences. According to the given context, we can readily infer that the subject of the sentence is the State Council or central government. Providing a subject “we” in translated sentences not only conforms to the generally accepted syntax of English, but also accords with the thinking pattern of the target language readers, which perfectly realizes the functional equivalence in translation. Therefore, it can be concluded that in publicity documents, multiple omissions will not cause obstacles in understanding, but make the writing more compact and concise.

Another example is as follows:

Example 16: 加大稳外贸稳外资力度。

English version: Efforts to ensure stable performance in foreign trade and investment were intensified.

By analyzing the sentence structure of the source text, “efforts” must be added as the subject in the translation. After adding the subject, the English version reads more naturally. This is the only way to make the target language readers understand more thoroughly and to achieve the purpose of functional equivalence. However, after careful analysis, it is not hard to find that the sentence is translated from the active sentence in Chinese to the passive sentence in English. Nida believes that functional equivalence translation inevitably involves many forms of expression (Nida, 1969, p. 70), because all languages are not identical in form. Therefore, if the translator wants to retain the message and content of the source language, it is necessary to reconstruct the form of the source language. As in the above example, “efforts” is necessary to achieve functional equivalence. Therefore, to achieve functional equivalence in a sentence like this one, the entire sentence structure must be altered.

5.2.2 Translation of Long and Complicated Sentences

Long and complicated sentences appear frequently in *Government Work Report*. When translating such sentences, translators need to handle them with care. If the form of a complicated Chinese sentence is kept in the corresponding English version, the translation must be lengthy and the syntax will appear confusing and illogical. To avoid that, the first thing to do is to split the long sentence into short sentences. Then, based on the logic relationship between every part of the Chinese sentence, the long and complicated sentences are translated into sentences that conform to the mindset of the target language readers, thus according with Functional Equivalence Theory. Here is an example sentence appearing in the report:

Example 17: 坚持房子是用来住的、不是用来炒的定位，探索新的发展模式，坚持租购并举，加快发展长租房市场，推进保障性住房建设，支持商品房市场更好满足购房者的合理住房需求，稳地价、稳房价、稳预期，因城施策促进房地产产业良性循环和健康发展的。

English version: Guided by the principle that houses are for living in, not for speculation, we will

explore new models for housing development and encourage both rentals and purchases. We will move faster to develop the long-term rental market, promote the construction of government-subsidized housing, and support the commodity housing market in better meeting the reasonable needs of homebuyers. We will keep land costs, housing prices and market expectations stable, and adopt city-specific measures to facilitate positive circulation and sound development in the real estate sector.

In the above example sentence, it is obvious that there are three complete sentences in the English version, while there is only one complete sentence in the Chinese version. Through careful analysis, this long and complicated sentence can be divided into three aspects in terms of meaning: guiding ideology, concrete measures and implementation effect. Therefore, translators are supposed to translate according to the logic of the sense groups of the source language. On the basis of Nida's view, meaning takes precedence over form. The meaning of this long and complicated sentence is expressed through a collection of these three sense groups, which is more effective and elegant than retaining the grammar of the original text. Meanwhile, it can also make it easier for the target audience to understand the meaning of the original text and fully realize the functional equivalence, of which the reproduction by the closest natural equivalence is the basic requirement.

5.3 Translation on Discourse Level

A discourse is a text in natural language conveying complete meaning in a given context, but is not limited by sentence syntax. It is intended to accomplish a specific communicative task or a given action. Because a discourse is a semantic whole, its translation should be viewed from a holistic perspective. In order to show the inherent logical relations of the discourse, the translation must use the means of cohesion. Halliday classifies cohesion devices into five types: reference, conjunction, substitution, omission and lexical cohesion (Halliday, 1985, p. 13), among which reference and conjunction appear frequently in the report. Therefore, a discourse analysis of the report in terms of both reference and conjunction according to the Functional Equivalence Theory will be conducted in the following part.

5.3.1 Translation of Reference

Cohesion of reference is an important strategy in translation. In the process of English translation of *Government Work Report*, the most commonly used is pronoun reference, which can achieve the effect of avoiding verbosity and striving for conciseness, while also conforming to the sentence structure of English and the thinking pattern of Westerners. Therefore, target language readers react to the intended text in much the way as readers of the source language. The following is a typical sentence to illustrate this point.

Example 18: 延续实施研发费用加计扣除政策，将制造企业研发费用加计扣除比例提高到100%。

English version: We continued the additional tax deduction for R&D expenses and increased this deduction to cover 100 percent of such expenses for manufacturing enterprises.

In the above example sentence, the noun “研发费用加计扣除” appears twice, while in English version “this deduction” is employed to replace the former noun “研发费用加计扣除”. Therefore, the English version accords with the reading habit of target language readers and also avoid repetition in this way. Besides, it perfectly realizes the functional equivalence.

5.3.2 Translation of Cohesive Device

Conjunction is a device of using conjunctive components to exhibit individual logical relationships in a context (Hu et al., 2009, p. 58). In the process of Chinese-English translation, conjunctions are often used as an important finesse of cohesion to strengthen the connection between parts of the language. Therefore, in the course of translating the report, conjunction is supposed to employed to achieve functional equivalence on discourse level. The following is an example sentence:

Example 19: 打击哄抬物价行为。保持物价水平基本稳定。

English version: We will crack down on price gouging, and ensure price levels are kept generally stable.

In the above example sentence, it is clear that there are two complete Chinese sentences, while these two sentences are merged into only one English sentence by adding the conjunction “and”, which realizes functional equivalence in terms of content and form. If we follow the original Chinese grammar mechanically and consider every sentence as a coordinate one, the English version must be illogic and loose, and what is worse that the meaning of translated version maybe distorted sometimes. Therefore, in Chinese-English translation, especially international publicity translation, each sentence must accord with the native grammar pattern and some conjunctions should be added to achieve functional equivalence between source language and target language.

6. Conclusion

As a typical international publicity material, *Government Work Report* is an important medium for spreading China’s positive voice and for foreign readers to understand China’s development.

This thesis applies Nida’s Functional Equivalence Theory to analyze the English translation of 2022 *Government Work Report* in terms of lexical, syntactic and discourse level, and explores the feasibility and positivity of Functional Equivalence Theory in terms of guiding the translation of international publicity materials. Through the analysis and discussion of example sentences of English version, We find that Functional Equivalence Theory is currently one of the most useful translation theories in the process of interpreting and analyzing the translation of *Government Work Report*, and future translators can make better translations of publicity materials under the guidance of the theory. Moreover, translators of international publicity materials must be faithful to the original text to make the translation more natural for target language readers to understand. Of course, Functional Equivalence Theory has its own limitations and is not perfect, nor is it a panacea for all the problems in the translation process. The theory gives priority to readers’ response, while it is difficult to assess readers’

specific reactions to the translation because of their different cultural, religious and customary backgrounds and thinking patterns.

To sum up, Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory provides an effective help for future translations and can be used to guide the translation of different types of text. Hopefully, we can explore more appropriate translation strategies to better spread China's positive voice.

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