

Original Paper

Application of Skills and Case Analysis in *Traditional Chinese Medicine in China*

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Abstract

The translator chose an excerpt from the white paper Traditional Chinese Medicine in China for translation practice, discussing the reasons for selecting this text and analyzing the characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) texts. The translator gives a brief summary about the difficulties in the translation process, namely the translation of long sentences, sentences without subjects, Chinese idioms, etc. Considering the professionalism and cultural specificity of TCM texts, the translator proposed translation techniques such as conversion, amplification, and omission in order to understand the differences between English and Chinese, to achieve the expression habit of getting rid of the language shell and getting closer to the target language.

Keywords

translation practice, Traditional Chinese Medicine Text, translation skills

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Project

Medical texts use various words in expression, which are closely related to the specific function of medical texts. Overall, medical texts consist of following characteristics: strong professionalism, the special meaning of verb, new words, the increasing uses of noun groups, more new meanings of old words and more antonyms (Zhang Yu, 1996: 19-21).

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese government has always attached great importance to and vigorously supported the development of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). TCM and Western medicine complement each other and advance together, jointly safeguarding and enhancing people's health. This has become a major highlight and prominent advantage of China's medical and health care system with Chinese characteristics. The white paper provides an overview of the development of traditional Chinese medicine in China, including its historical development, policy

measures, inheritance and development, international exchanges and cooperation. It demonstrates the high importance that the country attaches to the development of traditional Chinese medicine. This landmark publication charts the historical trajectory and unique attributes of traditional Chinese medicine, thoroughly detailing the national strategies and principal actions taken by China to foster the growth of this sector. It explores the transmission and evolution of traditional Chinese medicine, along with its engagement in international exchanges and collaborative efforts, presenting a comprehensive overview of the status quo of traditional Chinese medicine's development in China. The White Paper serves to underscore the scientific validity of traditional Chinese medicine, while also exemplifying its cultural characteristics and the significant role it plays in the rich tapestry of Chinese culture.

1.2 Significance of the Project

The translator believes that the translation of the White Paper on Traditional Chinese Medicine in China has profound significance. Firstly, this helps to enhance the visibility and influence of traditional Chinese medicine in the international community, allowing more countries and people to understand the unique charm and value of traditional Chinese medicine. By translating traditional Chinese medicine culture into English, we can showcase to the world the outstanding contributions of traditional Chinese medicine in disease prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation, and promote the internationalization process of traditional Chinese medicine. Secondly, this is also an important bridge for strengthening international exchanges and cooperation in traditional Chinese medicine, which helps to promote mutual learning and reference between traditional Chinese medicine and the medical systems of other countries and regions, and jointly promote the development of the global medical industry. The translator chose the *Traditional Chinese Medicine in China* as the text for the practical course of traditional Chinese medicine translation, which meets the current needs of international dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine and provides a comprehensive window for the international community to understand traditional Chinese medicine. The translator hopes that through this translation practice, we can better promote international exchanges and cooperation in traditional Chinese medicine and contribute Chinese wisdom and strength to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

1.3 Content Structure

This translation practice report consists of five parts. The first part of essay gives a brief introduction to this translation project, including the background of the translation project, the significance of the research, and the structure of the report. The second part explains the translation preparation, which consists the analysis of the source text, and the linguistic features of the source text . The third part is the case study, which analyzes the translation strategies and techniques used in the specific cases of translation practice. The translator lists and analyzes some difficulties in the process of translation and how the translator solves these problems. In the forth part, the translator enumerates some translation skills used in the medical translation and gives some examples to explain separately. The last part is the conclusion, which summarizes the gains and limitations of this translation practice.

2. Report on the Translation of the Source Text

This chapter is a translation report, which consists of four parts. In the first part, the translator analyzes the source text and the reasons for choosing this document. In the second section, the translator discusses the difficulties encountered in the translation process. The third part reflects on why these difficulties arise, and the fourth part is the solution to these difficulties.

2.1 *On the Source Text*

2.1.1 Content of the Source Text

The article emphasizes the unique value and important position of TCM in the modern medical system. TCM has significant advantages in disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and health preservation, particularly in the management of chronic diseases, difficult-to-treat diseases, and sub-health states. At the same time, TCM focuses on individualized treatment, emphasizing syndrome differentiation and treatment. Furthermore, it elaborates on the policies and measures of the Chinese government to promote the development of the TCM industry. Lastly, it also introduces the remarkable achievements of TCM in international exchanges and cooperation. TCM has gone global, becoming a bridge and tie connecting friendships between China and other countries. The Chinese government actively promotes the internationalization of TCM, strengthening exchanges and cooperation with countries worldwide to jointly promote the inheritance and development of TCM on a global scale.

2.1.2 Linguistic Features of the Source Text

White paper is a document or report publicly released by the government or parliament on important national affairs such as politics, diplomacy, economy, and culture, named after its white cover. As an official document, it largely represents the government's position, characterized by clear facts, clear stance, standardized writing, concise language, and no literary color.

Medical texts use various words in expression, which are closely related to the specific function of medical texts. Overall, medical texts consist of following characteristics: strong professionalism, the special meaning of verb, new words, the increasing uses of noun groups, more new meanings of old words and more antonyms (Zhang Yu, 1996: 19-21). It is important to take into account both the characteristics of the white paper and the peculiarities of TCM translation. White papers are typically authoritative, accurate, and objective, so the translation should ensure rigorous language and precise wording to avoid ambiguity or misunderstanding. Therefore, special attention should be paid to the accuracy and consistency of terminology, maintaining the cultural characteristics and context of the original text, and appropriately supplementing and explaining cultural backgrounds to ensure the accuracy and readability of the translation.

2.2 *Difficulties in the Process of Translation*

2.2.1 Difficulties in Translating Long Sentence

From the composition of Chinese sentences, we can see that the syntactic feature of Chinese is parataxis, which underlines logical and meaning relevance, and does not care about the formal cohesion between words and sentences (Feng, 85). In Chinese texts, short sentences are the most important language units,

which can be used independently and become simple sentences. If short sentences are combined with other small sentences in a certain relationship, multiple small sentences are generated to express meaning. Because the relationship between relational words and cohesion in Chinese is often implicit, it is often necessary to add relational words to express this relationship in translation.

Example 1

Source text: 随着人们健康观念变化和医学模式转变, 中医药越来越显示出独特价值。

Target text: As ideas on fitness and medical models change and evolve, traditional Chinese medicine has come to underline a more and more profound value.

Analysis: As for the long sentences, It is necessary to understand the syntactic structure of the original text, the central content of the whole sentence and its meanings at all levels, and then analyze the logical relationship between the meanings at several levels, and then translate the meaning of the original text correctly according to the characteristics and expressions of Chinese, instead of sticking to the form of the original text. The original text is a compound sentence, where the first sentence serves as background information to explain the conditions under which the next sentence occurs. In the process of translating this long sentence, it is necessary to maintain the logical relationship and core meaning of the original text, while adapting to the expression characteristics of English.

2.2.2 Difficulties in Translating Chinese idioms

Idioms are the essence of a nation's language condensed in the long-term development process. It has rich meaning, concise expression, and catchy sentence structure, which is popular and widely used by the general public. Both Chinese and English have extremely rich idioms. Idioms, as a common language, mainly include colloquial sayings, proverbs, allegorical sayings, maxims, etc. They have a wide range of categories and prominent ethnic characteristics. Because of this, the translation of idioms is also quite complex (Wang, 86).

Example 2

Source text: 中医药在历史发展进程中, 兼容并蓄、创新开放, 形成了独特的生命观、健康观、疾病观、防治观。

Target text: TCM has created unique views on life, on fitness, on diseases and on the prevention and treatment of diseases during its long history of absorption and innovation.

Analysis: In this sentence, “兼容并蓄”“创新开放” needs to be analyzed based on the specific context. As mentioned above, when translating content related to one's own culture to foreign countries, corresponding supplementary explanations need to be provided. In this context, it focuses more on the incomprehension caused by confusion rather than the literal meaning of confusion. Therefore, the translator provided such a translation. Translators should fully utilize creativity and inspiration in translation, so that the expression and meaning of emotional words in the translation are not inferior to those in the original text (Chen, 89). When dealing with the expression of “兼容并蓄”“创新开放”, the translation successfully conveys the cultural characteristics and deep meanings of the original text by selecting expressive vocabulary and flexible sentence structures. At the same time, the translator also

fully utilized two adjectives like absorption and innovation, making the translated text reach a level equivalent to the original text in terms of emotional expression and meaning transmission.

2.2.3 Difficulties in Translating Sentence Without Subject

A sentence with only a predicate without a subject is a special sentence pattern in Chinese, and the missing subject does not affect the complete expression of the required meaning. Translating these sentences without a subject usually requires adding a subject that conforms to the predicate logic in connection with the context according to the meaning of the sentence, or change the sentence structure.

Example 3

Source text: 实现了自然科学与人文科学的融合和统一，蕴含了中华民族深邃的哲学思想。

Target text: It represents a combination of natural sciences and humanities, embracing profound philosophical ideas of the Chinese nation.

Analysis: This sentence is a sentence without subject according to Chinese expression habits. The translator's method is to display the subject using the formal subject "it". In Chinese, it is often seen that the subject is often implicit in sentences that are not obvious or have no subject. From the perspective of semantic integrity and accuracy of the translation, the phenomenon that there is no subject in Chinese expression often appears, which shows that in order to make English sentences and structures more complete in the translation process, subjects should be added according to the context (Li, 5). When the original text is translated into English, we must supplement the subject according to the rules of English. The most important principle is to consider the context, and then consider the needs of English grammar habits and writing needs.

2.3 An Analysis of the Causes for the Difficulties

From the composition of Chinese sentences, the syntactic feature of Chinese emphasizes logical relevance and meaning relevance, and pays little attention to the formal cohesion between words and sentences. Comparatively speaking, English sentences emphasize form and function, so the syntactic characteristic of English is hypotaxis. In order to express the relationship between sentence elements, logical words or relational words are needed. The number and case of English nouns, the tense and voice of predicate verbs, and the relative pronouns, adverbs and conjunctions between the main sentence and the subordinate sentence can all exercise their grammatical functions and play a role in linking.

English sentences pay attention to the form and function, and sentences are composed of subject-predicate-pivot. It is formal consistency makes the subject and predicate strictly restricted by English grammar. Therefore, in the process of Chinese-English translation, it is the key to find the subject of a sentence and the predicate that matches it.

2.4 Strategies Adopted in the Translation

This part is about solutions to the difficulties above. For these difficulties, amplification, omission, and division can be used as solutions.

2.4.1 Division

A word in English can serve as a few sentence components, so it is often necessary to change the nature

of the word when serving as different components. Due to the differences between the two languages in grammar and idioms, the translation must change the nature of words while ensuring the original meaning unchanged.

Example 4

Source text: 建立健全中医药参与突发公共事件医疗救治和重大传染病防治的机制，发挥中医药独特优势。

Target text: A mechanism has been established for TCM to participate in medical relief of public emergencies and the prevention and control of serious infectious diseases.

Analysis: In this sentence, the source text is in the active voice, and the target text has transformed it from tense to passive form. Because English sentences often use objects as subjects, while Chinese sentences often use personal pronouns as subjects, there is a difference between active and passive between English and Chinese. Translators sometimes need to change the nature of words, that is, to translate the nature of one word into the nature of another word, so as to make up for the differences in thinking and culture in the process of English-Chinese translation and let the translation more fluent. (Zhang, 44)

2.4.2 Amplification

Because of the different languages, what is considered unnecessary and useless in one language may be necessary in another. The translator should adjust the situation, to provide those implied meanings to the readers. There are few conjunctions between Chinese words, and the logical relationship between them is often implicit, which is expressed by the order of words. Although the relationship between sentences in Chinese is often expressed by conjunctions, sometimes it is also implied between sentence orders, without conjunctions to express cohesion.

Example 5

Source text: 抗疟药物“青蒿素”的发明，拯救了全球特别是发展中国家数百万人的生命。同时，乳香、没药等南药的广泛引进，丰富了中医药的治疗手段。

Target text: The discovery of qinghaosu (artemisinin, an anti-malaria drug) has saved millions of lives, especially in developing countries. Meanwhile, massive imports of medicinal substances such as frankincense and myrrh have enriched TCM therapies.

Analysis: Some specialized words have specific connotations, and without annotations, readers may easily become confused due to unfamiliarity and cultural differences, which can affect their understanding of the text. Adding annotations can eliminate cognitive barriers and aid in accurate interpretation. Therefore, a method of adding annotations was adopted for the translation of artemisinin in the target text.

2.4.3 Omission

Omission refers to the fact that some words in the original text are not translated in the translated text, such as articles, conjunctions, pronouns, especially personal pronouns, relative pronouns, relative adverbs, etc., which are often used in English, but seldom appear when translated into Chinese. To make the translation faithful and authentic, omission is naturally necessary. Translation is not a word-to-word

translation. It is most important to conform to the expression habits of the target language. Many words expressing categories in Chinese that can be omitted in English translation.

Example 6

Source text: 中医诊疗着眼于“病的人”而不仅是“人的病”，着眼于调整致病因子作用于人体后整体功能失调的状态。

Target text: TCM therapies focus on the person who is sick rather than the illness that the patient contracts, i.e., aiming to restore the harmonious state of body functions that is disrupted by pathogenic factors.

Analysis: In this sentence, it is necessary to delete“状态”in this sentence. What this sentence describes is surely a phenomenon, and it is not necessary to translate the category words. There is no need to translate the sentence with similar meaning.

Some category words are only used to introduce a specific noun or verb. Choosing to omit makes the translation more concise. Any word without any useful function in a sentence and without any supplementary meaning should be deleted during translation. (Pinkham, 3)

Translation skills are created for overcoming cross-cultural barriers. The obstacles in translation mostly come from the differences in the nature, semantic structure and syntactic structure of words. Accordingly, these translation methods trend to be centered on the nature, semantic structure and syntactic structure of words (Ye, 62). There are many kinds of translation skills, and they mainly include some skills such as division, amplification and omission, as mentioned above. These methods are commonly used in the process of translation. Chinese and English have different expression habits and commonly used sentence structures, so translation skills are needed. The material and social life of a nation, as well as its history, customs, and habits, are largely reflected through idioms, so the translation of idioms becomes an important aspect of cultural transformation in translation. To translate Chinese idioms into English idioms, the translator must first strive to express the ideological content of the original text in an accurate manner. Try to maintain the image, metaphor, rhetorical effect, and national culture of Chinese idioms as much as possible. English and Chinese idioms have their own characteristics, but in a certain extent, they have commonalities. Exploring the similarities and differences in translation is the foundation for mutual translation, as translators can understand and comprehend their original meaning. Sometimes it is necessary to delete some words that do not in line with the thinking and expression of the target language on the basis of the original text to avoid complicated translation. Omission is not to delete some ideas from the original text. That is to say, on the premise of not affecting the expression of the original meaning, the redundant parts are deleted, so as to materialize the goal of equivalence in form, content and spirit between the translation and the original text.

3. Conclusion

In the process of translation, the translator has trained her translation ability and learned much medical

knowledge. Some preparations have been done before translating. The translator have experienced the entire process from collecting translation materials, preparing for the translation process, correcting translations, to gaining practical experience in translation, and have gained a lot. In the stage of collecting translation materials, I have accumulated rich translation materials by consulting classic works of traditional Chinese medicine, academic papers, clinical cases, etc. These materials not only cover the basic theories and treatment methods of traditional Chinese medicine, but also contain rich practical experience and cases, providing me with abundant opportunities for translation practice. The translator first comprehensively and profoundly understood the contents of the material, the linguistic features of it and some relevant background information. Prior to starting the translation, the translator spent considerable time preparing, such as familiarizing herself with the terminology and concepts unique to TCM, as well as reviewing translation principles and strategies specific to medical texts. The translator also practiced translating smaller segments to get a feel for the language and cultural nuances involved. After the translation, the translator carefully corrected and polished it. During the process of correcting the translations of classmates in the class, the translator also identified some shortcomings and errors in their translations and made timely corrections. At the same time, the translator also drew valuable experience from the corrections, providing useful references for future translation work.

Undeniably, the translator's medical knowledge has undergone substantial expansion through translating traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) documents. In this endeavor, the translator has acquired extensive knowledge pertaining to both TCM and Western medicine, encompassing an understanding of numerous common clinical conditions and their respective symptoms, alongside the proficiency to prescribe appropriate treatments. Furthermore, the translator has encountered numerous TCM terminology, which, without a certain degree of professional proficiency, would be challenging to comprehend and translate accurately. Secondly, the translator's bilingual proficiency and translation capabilities have seen notable improvement. In the realm of translating traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), a thorough grasp of the differences between Chinese and English is crucial.

Through this practice of translating traditional Chinese medicine, the translator deeply experienced the hardships and joys of translation work. Translation is not only a language art, but also a discipline that requires profound professional knowledge and rigorous attitude. In future learning and work, translators will continue to strive to improve translation skills and contribute to the dissemination and development of culture.

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