

## *Original Paper*

# Research on Publicity Translation of International Sports Events Based on Eco-Translatology —A Case Study of Hangzhou Asian Games

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### ***Abstract***

*The paper takes the perspective of Eco-translatology and focuses on the translation of publicity materials in international sports events. The official website of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou was selected as the research object and “three-dimensional transformations” were adopted as the research methods. The study analyses the causes of the strategies used in the translation and provides corresponding translation methods such as combination, transliteration, recreation and omission based on the linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions. The research aims to provide references and reflections for the future publicity translation of international sports events when telling Chinese stories and promoting Chinese culture going abroad.*

### ***Keywords***

*eco-translatology, international publicity translation, three-dimensional transformations, Hangzhou Asian Games*

## **1. Introduction**

The 19th Asian Games Hangzhou (hereinafter referred to as the Hangzhou Asian Games) is the third time that China has hosted the highest international comprehensive sports event in Asia after the Beijing Asian Games in 1990 and the Guangzhou Asian Games in 2010. The Hangzhou Asian Games both embraces the spirit of man’s fraternal unity and hard struggle and it is also permeated with the charm of traditional culture in Hangzhou and even in the whole of China. The publicity materials on the official website of the Hangzhou Asian Games are an important window for China to build a

regional image and spread Chinese culture. With the improvement of China's international status and influence, a number of comprehensive international sports events have been held in China one after another.

As a new theory in the field of translation studies in China, Eco-translatology has been gradually perfected, and it is feasible to guide translation practice. By combining Eco-translatology with the English translation of publicity materials in the Hangzhou Asian Games, the study enriches the practice and application of Eco-translatology. It is also hoped that the research can serve as a helpful reference for future translation of international events, contributing to the important task of telling Chinese stories well and spreading the voice of China.

## 2. Eco-Translatology

Eco-translatology was formally put forward by Professor Hu Gengshen in 2008. The birth of Eco-translatology results from the combined action of historical problems and practical needs in the development of contemporary Chinese translation studies (Wei & Liu, 2022, p. 10). Eco-translatology can be understood as an ecological approach to translation studies or translation studies from an ecological perspective. As a new translation theory in the Chinese translation community, Hu defines that translation is guided by the translator, supported by the text and it is a translator's adaptation and selection activity in a translation eco-environment (Hu, 2008, p. 12). The translation eco-environment refers to an organic whole composed of language, communication, culture, society, as well as authors, readers, sponsors etc. The translator is first selected by the specific translation eco-environment, and then becomes the center of the entire translation activity after "adapting" to the world presented by the original text, original language and target language. According to Darwinian evolution, the target of "adaptation" can only be a living body, so only the translator can play an active role in it and "select" the adaptability to the translation eco-environment and the final version of the translation (Hu, 2008, p. 91).

Ecological translatology aims to explore the effects of translation activities on language, culture and the environment, and how these effects in turn affect translation activities themselves. The theory holds that translation is a dynamic text transfer process, in which the text is transferred from the original ecological environment to the target ecological environment, and the translator needs to "adapt" to the translation ecological environment, so as to "select" the best translation. Translation is closely related to language, culture, and communication. Therefore, Hu further explained the translation principle based on multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptive selection. The three-dimensional transformations method is the core of this principle, which is also known as the adaptive selection in linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions. The linguistic dimension concerns the expression of language, the cultural dimension concerns the contextual effect of translation, and the communicative dimension focuses on the interpersonal intention of translation (Hu, 2006, p. 51). This paper will

analyze the translation of publicity materials in the Hangzhou Asian Games based on these three dimensions.

### 3. The Translation of Publicity Materials for International Sports Events

The translation of publicity materials refers to translate relevant materials from Chinese to other foreign languages, so as to enable foreign people to understand the relevant information of China. It mainly includes the translation from the three aspects of news, politics and culture (Hu, 2023, p. 6). Among them, the translation of publicity materials for international sports events primarily involves cultural publicity translation. Through official media, relevant information will be released and the basic content and rules of the sports will also be introduced. On the basis of conveying the global concept of sports, the translation of publicity materials for international sports can spread China's sports culture and sportsmanship, attracts the target audiences to watch online or offline, and finally creates an international image of China as a positive, respectable, credible and lovable country.

This requires translators to not only realize the accurate conversion from Chinese to English at the linguistic level, but also represent the confidence of China to communicate with the world. In the eco-environment of the translation of publicity materials for international sports events, the original publicity text, website visitors, translators, and the associated culture and society constitute an organic whole, and translators need to play a role in this whole to realize the adaptive transformation of translation in the linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions.

### 4. Case Analysis

This section selects the relevant contents of the columns of "Asian Games Culture" and "Asian Games Programs" in the official website of the Hangzhou Asian Games (<https://www.hangzhou2022.cn/>), and analyzes them from the linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions.

#### 4.1 *Adaptation and Selection from the Linguistic Dimension*

To realize the adaptation and selection from the linguistic dimension, translator should accurately transplant the source text into the target text after adapting to the translation eco-environment, so as to make the translation in line with the habits of the target audiences as much as possible (Yuan, 2021, p. 134). This section analyses the translation methods of paraphrase and combination at the lexical and syntactic level under the linguistic dimension to realize adaptation and selection. This is the basis of translation activities, which mainly involves language selection, vocabulary selection, sentence structure and so on. In this dimension, translators need to have a deep understanding of the source language and the target language in order to carry out the language conversion accurately. In addition, translators also need to pay attention to the development and changes of language in order to better adapt to the translation needs of different periods.

**Example 1**

**TT:** Co-Host Cities Department

**Example 2**

**TT:** International Relations Department

The departmental structure can directly reveal the division of responsibilities for the event. In the official website of Hangzhou Asian Games, visitors can retrieve a clear organizational structure of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee, in which “杭外工作部” is mainly responsible for obtaining closer cooperation with co-hosting cities in China, giving full play to the strengths of different cities, and making achievements in volunteer services. “外联部” is responsible for negotiating with the IOC, the OCA and other international sports organizations to provide more resources and support for the Hangzhou Asian Games.

Therefore, although the two departments have similarities in terms of institutional responsibilities, they are responsible for different aspects. The translator applies the paraphrase method to interpret the original text, so as to accurately reproduce the specific responsibilities of the original institution within the scope of the linguistic structure and semantics. The translator has realized the optimal adaptive conversion in this translation eco-environment while maintaining the style of the source language, which is more conducive to the website viewers knowing clearly the responsibilities of each organization.

**Example 3**

**TT:** The base of torch is embossed with eight water veins symbolizing the evolution of civilization and representing the eight major river systems in Zhejiang. The torch body is designed based on the evolution from dermatoglyphic fingerprint patterns specific to the Liangzhu Culture, which are naturally intertwined and exquisite. The torch head is characterized by the meaning of Jade Cong, one of the ritual jades, showing a harmonious square-round integration;

Chinese is a paratactic language that emphasizes meaning but not form with the utterances not constrained by formal structure and the invisible grammar, while English focuses on form, frequently using a variety of connective devices (Lian, 2010, p. 73). From the above introduction of the Asian Games torch design program, it can be clearly seen that the original text is presented in the form of clauses and most of them use four-word format. Therefore, the translator is required to adapt to the eco-environment in the translation of the Asian Games publicity materials and grasp the different characteristics of Chinese and English, so as to transform the paratactic text into the hypotactic translation. The translator adopts the method of combination to form the main structure of the three sentences by using “be embossed with”, “be designed based” and “be characterized by”, and then in each sentence, the prepositions “with”, “from... to...” and “by” are used respectively, which guides the non-restrictive attributive clauses and non-predicate forms to merge the clauses, so that the loose components are closely connected.

#### *4.2 Adaptation and Selection from the Cultural Dimension*

The Hangzhou Asian Games is a stage to showcase the spirit of sports and culture, and a cultural event for China to face the world. As a carrier of Chinese culture's external dissemination, they all it reflects China's unique cultural characteristics and ethnic connotations compared to other ethnic groups from competition projects to creative cultural products. Therefore, we can use the methodology of eco-translatology to tell Chinese stories and spread the Chinese voice to foreign audiences (Yuan, 2021, p. 136). At the same time, the author believes that the degree of adaptation of translators to the cultural ecology of the source language and the target language will affect the selection of strategies during the translation process. At the cultural level, translation methods such as transliteration, recreation, literal translation with annotations, and free translation can be adopted. This is the core of translation activities, mainly concerned with cultural understanding and transmission. In this dimension, translators need to have a deep understanding of the cultural background of the source language and the target language in order to carry out cultural transformation accurately. At the same time, translators should also pay attention to cultural diversity to avoid the emergence of cultural hegemony and cultural aggression.

##### **Example 4**

**TT:** The medal of the 19th Asian Games is named Shan Shui, which is...

The medal of the Hangzhou Asian Games is named “湖山”, which presents the characteristics of the rippling lakes and rolling mountains in Hangzhou, and reflects the features of Hangzhou's ecological civilization capital. In the interface of the English official website, the translator chose the translation strategy of transliteration and the word was translated into “Shan Shui” rather than “Lakes and Hills” or “Mountains and Rivers”. “Shan Shui” is a unique aesthetic image in China and the same initial consonant “Sh” gives people a smooth and fluent feeling when reading, achieving the beauty of voice. It is a better expression in the current translation eco-environment. If it is directly translated word-to-word, the translation will seem rigid.

##### **Example 5**

**TT:** The theme of the core graphics of Hangzhou Asian Games is “Meeting the world”.

“润泽” originates from the local cultural element of Hangzhou - silk, and its core graphics show the delicate and agile characteristics of silk. The translator abandoned the meaning of itself and adopted the translation method of recreation to translate it as “Meeting the world” rather than “Moist and Glossy”. Although it itself means “Moisturizing and shiny”, the “润泽” here is more of a cultural image, presenting Hangzhou's responsibility as an important town on the Maritime Silk Road. Therefore, the translator is not limited to the overall concept of a small range between Chinese and English, but takes into account the large-scale translation eco-environment between China and the world.

**Example 6**

**TT:** The color system of Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 is themed as “harmony of colors”, inspired by a famous poem by Su Shi from Song Dynasty, “If the West Lake was the Great Beauty, she would look beautiful whether in light or heavy make-up”.

**Example 7**

**TT:** The combination-Memories of Jiangnan-derives its name from a poem by Bai Juyi. This great poet of the Tang Dynasty wrote, “When I recall Jiangnan, Hangzhou brings back most of my memories”.

**Example 8**

**TT:** Shan Shui is characterized by the ceremonial jade Cong in the Liangzhu Culture (5,300BC-4,300BC).

The official website of the Hangzhou Asian Games quotes poems with cultural characteristics many times while the target audiences are not familiar with traditional Chinese culture and has no concept of Chinese dynasties and historical celebrities. Therefore, literal translation with annotations can be used in translation to explain the dynasty and the ancients respectively. In Example 6, although “宋代诗人苏轼” is a famous poet in ancient China, foreign audiences may not understand him. It is inappropriate for the translator to literally translate it as “Su Shi from Song Dynasty”. The author believes that annotations can be added later, such as “Su Shi from Song Dynasty (1037-1101 AD)”; The same is true for “唐朝诗人白居易” in Example 7. The author recommends translation as “Bai Juyi from Tang Dynasty (772-846 AD)”; In Example 8, the translator takes the cultural dimension into consideration and annotates the Liangzhu culture.

In Example 6, “西子” is the head of the four beautiful women in ancient China that Chinese audiences are particularly familiar with this cultural image. But if it is directly transliterated as “Xi Shi”, the foreign target audiences will not understand the cultural connotation. Therefore, the translator translated it into “the Great Beauty” so that it adapts to the cultural eco-environment in the cultural dimension.

*4.3 Adaptation and Selection from the Communicative Dimension*

In Eco-translatology, the translator needs to make adaptive selection on the basis of adapting to the specific translation eco-environment to achieve the purpose of interpretation, publicity and communication to the target audience. In the official website of the Hangzhou Asian Games, the design purpose of it is to enable foreign friends who are interested in the Hangzhou Asian Games to have a way to understand the basic content of the event. At the same time, it plays the role of popularizing the rules of sports events, showing the construction of Chinese sports, and realizing the dialogue between China and the world through sports events. This section analyzes the communication dimension from the discourse level by adopting methods such as division and omission. This is the goal of translation activities, which are mainly concerned with the transmission and understanding of information. In this dimension, translators need to consider the needs and responses of readers in order to effectively carry

out communicative transformation. In the process of translation, translators need to pay attention to the communicative functions of the original text and the target text to ensure that the target text can effectively convey the meaning of the original text and meet the needs of the target readers. At the same time, translators also need to pay attention to the changes in the communication environment, such as social, political, economic and other factors on the impact of translation, in order to better adapt to different communication scenes.

### Example 9

**TT:** The black and white stones are displayed on a Weiqi board with 361 crosses made of 19 vertical lines and 19 horizontal lines. It is played as the following rules:

- 1) Weiqi is played by taking turns to put black and white stones on the cross of the board. One can only go one stone each time.
- 2) The cross made by the vertical and horizontal stone line is the “Qi” of the stone. When the “Qi” of one stone or connected stones is completely occupied by the other player, it is called “dead stone” and has to be left up from the board.
- 3) Finally, who wins more area on the board wins the game.
- 4) The act of lifting a stone for each other is called “Jie” (rob). In order to avoid non-stop game with repeated lifting, one must not lift immediately in return after being lifted.

As an excellent traditional Chinese culture, Weiqi is also an competition event in the Hangzhou Asian Games. Therefore, the instruction about rules on the English official website will become the main source of information for those who are interested in it but not familiar with this sport. The translation of this part needs to emphasize whether it can achieve the informative function and illustrative function of translation and whether it can reflect the communicative intention.

At the same time, as a semantic unity with complete structure and clear function, the discourse should be based on logic in the process of formation and understanding. Compared with the obvious iconicity of Chinese, English pays more attention to logic. So the translation did not follow the original text but was divided into four points according to the order of playing Weiqi by using division, which becomes more logical and also achieves the purpose of publicity on English websites at the communicative level.

### Example 10

**TT:** The mascots of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou, transcending time and space, inspire everyone to reach for their dreams. They stand for not only the joy of sports but the culmination of cultural and economic development, so much so that they agree with the character of Hangzhou and proudly join the ranks of the emblem and slogan of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou.

Grand rhetoric is often used in Chinese to express rich and intense emotions. “穿越..., 怀揣..., 抒...欢畅, 亮...灿烂, 树...标杆” are typical expressions of grand rhetoric. Translator should not only consider the neat Chinese writing style, but also consider the concise and clear expression characteristics of English. The translator directly translated the original text word for word, without

realizing that the target readers will think it is bombastic. Therefore, the translation method of omission can be adopted to dilute the exaggerated elements. The author believes that “穿越时空，怀揣梦想” are just written to elicit the design purpose of the Asian Games mascot in the later text and do not have a specific meaning in the sentence. So, they can be omitted and translated as “The mascots of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou not only convey the joy of sports, but also demonstrate the achievements in cultural and economic development. They are in line with the emblem and slogan of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou with Hangzhou characteristics.” The information will be expressed more clearly and is more conducive to the understanding of the target audience. By using the method of omission, the purpose of communication will be more accessible.

## 5. Conclusion

Ecological translatology is undoubtedly the product of ecological thoughts from a global perspective. Both economically and philosophically, ecological translatology is the inevitable result of the transformation of society and thought since the 20th century. Ecological transliteration, as a native Chinese translation theory, has promoted Chinese translation theory to “go out”, broken the traditional thinking pattern, and made a certain contribution to the balance between Eastern and Western translation theories.

From the perspective of Eco-translatology, translators have more choices because they are in the center. However, translators should choose the best expression on the basis of adapting to the specific translation eco-environment, and try to ensure that they are better accepted by the target language readers. This paper selects the publicity materials of the Chinese and English official websites of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou as the research object, and uses “three-dimensional transformations” to explore the optimal methods of the publicity materials in international events. The study shows that translators can use and paraphrase and combination in the linguistic dimension. In the cultural dimension, the translator can use transliteration, recreation, literal translation with annotations and free translation. In the communicative dimension, the translation methods such as division and omission can be adopted to make adaptive selection and transformations. Ultimately, it aims to provide reference for telling Chinese stories, disseminating Chinese voices, and taking Chinese culture to the global stage.

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