

On the Translation of English Film Titles from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Translation

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Abstract: With the increasingly frequent international cultural exchanges and the development of network multimedia technology, foreign movies, especially western English movies, continue to pour into the Chinese market. Movies are important carriers of language and culture. English movies have their unique linguistic features and rich national cultural connotations. Due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultural backgrounds, there will inevitably be a cultural collision in the translation and introduction of English movies. Under the guidance of the basic theory of cross-cultural translation, this paper examines the translation strategies and techniques of English film titles through the examples of English film titles translation, hoping to benefit the translation of film titles in the future.

1. Introduction

With the increasing frequency of international cultural exchanges, a large number of English movies are pouring into the Chinese market. Film is an important carrier of language and culture. Any film exists in a specific literature, history, philosophy, religion, customs and other comprehensive cultural system. Film titles, as movie symbols, also have their unique linguistic characteristics and rich national cultural connotations. Film title is a part of film packaging, with a strong guiding role, is the concentrated embodiment of the integration of film art and box office commerce. Therefore, the title translation of English movies is particularly important. As the Chinese label of English movies, the translation of movie titles should have a high degree of generalization of the content of movies, a high degree of concentration of story plots and a high degree of refinement of film themes, in order to enable Chinese audiences to "fall in love at first sight". Therefore, how to give English movies a wonderful and appropriate title in Chinese has become a prerequisite for attracting the audience's attention and making box office profits.

2. The Theoretical Basis of Cross-cultural Translation

All languages are rooted in culture and reflect and adhere to certain cultures. In cross-cultural translation, the translator must respect the culture of the source language and the target language and properly handle the cultural differences between them. Due to the differences in social background, religion and traditional culture, the translator inevitably encounters the imbalance of cultural information in the process of translation. At this time, it is necessary to apply translation theories and Strategies of cross-cultural translation to deal with relevant information, to preserve the rhyme of the source language culture to the maximum extent, to maintain the proper balance between the source language culture and the target language culture, and to enable the target language readers to achieve the same goal. The effect of the source language reader is the same.

In cross-cultural translation, according to the dynamic equilibrium theory of Eugene A. Nida, an American linguist, translator and translation theorist, the translator should accurately reproduce the cultural connotation of the source language in the target language based on four aspects of dynamic equivalence. In order to eliminate cultural differences and accurately reproduce the source culture, translators should follow the following three steps. Firstly, because different languages represent totally different cultures, it is impossible for a perfect translation to fully embody the cultural connotation of the original text. Therefore, the translator can only reproduce the source culture to

the maximum extent, and strive to create a translation that conforms to both the semantics of the original text and the cultural characteristics of the original text. For example, "The Shawshank Redemption" and "Tomb Raider", the audience can easily understand the story and reproduce the source language culture according to the Chinese translation. Secondly, if both meaning and culture are difficult to take into account, the translator has to abandon formal equivalence and reproduce the semantics and culture of the source text by changing the form of the source text. For example, the movie *All About Eve*, which is the most nominated film in the history of the Academy Awards (13 times), shows two generations of actresses from the peak down and from obscurity to star. "All About Eve" originally means "about Eve", but in the cultural background knowledge of Chinese audiences, they know Nuwa in Chinese culture, but they don't know Eve in Western culture. If they translate Chinese literally, they simply don't know what to say. Therefore, translators can eliminate cultural differences by changing the form of vocabulary. The word comet is used very well, which reflects the relentless replacement of the fleeting performing arts circle. Especially the collocation of the popular name "beauty" and comet forms a sharp contrast, which implies the theme of the film. Thirdly, if the change of form is still difficult to express the semantics and culture of the original text, we can use "heavy-hit" translation techniques to achieve the equivalence of the source language and the target language in meaning. "Heavy damage" refers to the transformation of the deep structure of the source language into the surface structure of the target language, i.e. the cultural connotation of the source language text is explained and explained by the words of the target language. For example, John Strauss Jr.'s biographical film *The Great Waltz* is a classic old Hollywood film. The original name of the film "The Great Waltz" means "Great Waltz". Many of the love scenes in the film and the inspiration for John Jr. to create *Waltz* came from Austria's beautiful natural environment. The translation of *Chunxiao on Cuidi* is full of natural style, which gives the audience a scene full of vitality and romance in spring. At first glance, the translation does not seem to be closely related to the theme of the biography of John Strauss Jr. After appreciating the film, it is not difficult for the audience to find that "Chunxiao on Cuidi" just reflects Strauss's lifelong passion for waltz creation, as well as Strauss's slightly regrettable love story and romantic melancholy theme song. It is the translator's profound understanding of the content of the film and the bold and heavy blow to the title that makes *Fang* a classic translation of the title.

3. An Analysis of English Film Title Translation from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Translation

From the perspective of cross-cultural translation, the translator should complete cultural reconstruction on the basis of a thorough and profound understanding of the content of the film, so that the translated title can meet the cultural aesthetic and psychological expectations of the target audience, and use various translation techniques in the process of translation to realize the function of the film title in the target language, so as to achieve the goal of conveying spirit and meaning, so as to enable the audience to achieve the goal of communicating with each other. The effect of the source language audience is the same.

3.1 Literal translation

The correspondence between literal translation and foreignization refers to ensuring the fluency of meaning and maintaining the original form to the greatest extent, especially involving some cultural information with strong national color, when conditions permit. For example, the following English movies are translated by literal translation, which not only makes the audience easy to accept, but also fully reflects the content of the film. For example, the movie *Schindler's List* was translated literally into *Schindler's List*, *Roman Holiday* into *Roman Holiday*, *Titanic* into *Titanic*, *Harry Potter* into *Harry Potter* and *Lion King* into *Lion King*. The translation of the titles of the above films adopts literal translation method, which fits the story of the film more appropriately. It is a highly condensed story and a highly refined theme of the film, so that the audience can see at a glance. However, the literal translation of some English movies tends to make people confused and inferior. If the 1990 American film *Ghost* was translated literally into *Ghost*, it sounds like a horror

film. The American film *As Good as It Gets*, produced in 1997, was translated into *Perfect*, literally in English, without showing the true meaning of the film.

3.2 Free translation

The correspondence between free translation and domestication refers to ensuring the complete equivalence between the original meaning and the original text, focusing on natural fluency, and ultimately making the relationship between the recipient and the translated information basically the same as that between the original recipient and the original information. In the practice of translating film titles, due to the differences between Chinese and Western languages and cultures, if one-sided emphasis is placed on the form of retaining film titles, it will inevitably affect the accurate transmission of meaning. Therefore, in the process of film title translation, in order to enable the audience to truly understand the connotation of English film title and realize the equivalence of English film title and Chinese film title in terms of information and aesthetics, free translation method is needed. For example, the American film *Speed* is an action thriller. If the title of *Speed* is translated literally into *Speed*, it is plain and not beautiful enough to be attractive. The translator translates it freely into *Speed of Life and Death*, which is faithful to the original name and embodies the characteristics of the film. *Speed* is related to life and death, and it arouses people's imagination.

3.3 Transliteration

Transliteration refers to the direct translation of Chinese characters according to the pronunciation of the title of the film. In general, transliteration is mainly used to name movies with names, place names or things reflecting the national characteristics and culture. For example, the film *Casablanca* is set in *Casablanca*, a Moroccan city controlled by Vichy France in World War II. In a dangerous and exotic romance, the hero and heroine meet again in troubled times, the vicissitudes of Henfrey Bogart's tough man, and the tenderness of Ingrid Bergman's silence, each has its own helplessness and contradictions. It is considered not only a heartbreaking love film, but also a film that promotes nationalism and patriotism. *Casablanca*, the ancient city of Morocco, has made a film, and it is also famous for it. With the film episode "*Time Goes By*", it is well known to the world.

3.4 Mixed translation

Mixed translation, which combines transliteration, literal translation, free translation and other forms in the process of cross-cultural translation, has achieved the goal of expressing life and meaning. Mixed translation is a common method in Film Title translation. The classic work of mixed translation is *The Waterloo Bridge*, which is one of the three sad and beautiful immortal love movies in the history of movies. Imagine, if the film is translated literally into *Waterloo Bridge*, it obviously can't let people know the plot at a glance, and it is easier to confuse the audience with the battle of Waterloo. Therefore, in translation, the translator only translates the bridge literally according to the plot, and skillfully introduces "blue", because "blue" has the meaning of "sadness" in English, and "blue" also implies the night atmosphere of the protagonists' acquaintance, love and separation. Therefore, the four characters of "*Broken Blue Bridge*", the perfect combination of Pearl couplets, elegant diction, romantic sentiment and deep artistic conception, while closely related to the theme of the film, vividly depict the artistic conception of the film, can be regarded as an insurmountable peak in the translation of Chinese film titles in foreign movies.

4. Conclusion

Film is a feast of culture. Film title is a pleasant "dish name". The quality of dish name newspaper affects the appetite of diners. Whether the translation of English film title is accurate and elegant is related to the inheritance of culture. In the practice of translating English film titles, the application of appropriate translation strategies and techniques, maintaining the proper balance between the original culture and the translated culture, and paying attention to the appeal of the

translated titles to the audience are bound to be the future trend of the study of English Film Title translation.

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