

Study on the Translation Skills of Tourist Guide Words in Taierzhuang Ancient City

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Abstract: Taking the English translation of tour guides in Taierzhuang as an example, this paper explores the translation of tour guides from the perspective of functionalist translation theory. Through theoretical discussion and practical analysis, the author demonstrates that the two principles of English translation of tour guides are “taking tourists as the starting point” and “disseminating Chinese culture as the orientation”. Only under the guidance of these principles can foreign tour guides truly become “envoys of friendship and disseminators of culture”.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the rapid development of global tourism, there is a thriving scene. In order to inherit the culture of the canal, carry forward the national spirit and prosper the tourism industry, Zaozhuang rebuilt the ancient city of Taierzhuang according to the orientation of “the old place of war, the ancient city of the canal, the water town of the north of the Yangtze River, and the fashionable life”, following the concept of “preserving, restoring and creating the ancient”, reproducing the prosperity of “businessmen rushing everywhere, people fishing in the river at night, singing for ten miles and no strike at night”. Today's Taierzhuang ancient city, which combines “Canal Culture” and “War Culture” as one city, combines “Qilu's passion” and “Jiangnan's charm” as one area, is a tourist attraction with humanistic charm, as well as a unique and world-renowned tourist and leisure resort along the line of transportation. With the popularity of Taierzhuang ancient city at home and abroad, the demand for foreign-related tourism services is also increasing. In foreign-related tourism services, the translation of tour guides plays an important role in the integration of tourism resources into the international market economy. At present, many scholars at home and abroad have studied the translation of tour guides, but there are few specialized systematic studies in this field. The research direction mainly focuses on the linguistic and cultural factors of tour guides.

2. Characteristics and Standards of Tour Guide Translation

The translation of tour guides is an important tool to publicize the culture and economy of tourist attractions. The translation of tour guides belongs to the research with strong applicability. Jia Wenbo believes that there is an inherent relationship and law between the text function of applied translation and translation strategies (Jia Wenbo: 2004). Therefore, the text function of the translation of tour guides can be realized by translation strategies. Different translation strategies determine different text functions. Generally speaking, tour guides are the language for tourists to understand scenic spots. Therefore, the guide words should be easy to understand, and the main function of the text should be to transmit information and induce action (Tang Liping: 2006). That is to say, the translation of the guide words should be able to convey the relevant information of tourist attractions and attract foreign tourists. However, the translation of tour guides should also have the mission of cultural transmission, and the translation of tour guides is a typical cross-cultural translation (Chen Gang, 2002). Language is the carrier of culture. Translation is not only the transformation between two different language forms, but also the communication between two different cultures. It has the mission of cultural exchange. The translation of tour guides should bear enough Chinese culture and have the function of promoting Chinese culture.

The translation texts of foreign-related tour guides are quite special. They are a combination of information text, expression text and imperative text. The translation of tour guides should be based on the premise of “faithfulness”. The so-called “faithfulness” refers to the ideological content of the original text and its correctness and scientificity, including cultural background, historical facts, astronomy and geography, scientific demonstration, aesthetic information and humanistic landscape, etc. From this point of view, the translation of tour guides should be “supportable in words”, “reasonable in words” and “sentimental in words”. As mentioned above, because of the particularity of the text of tour guide words, the language used should be a rich expressive and vivid oral language used by tour guides in communicating ideas and feelings with tourists, guiding tours, explaining and disseminating culture. This language expression directly affects the psychological activities of tourists, so it is necessary to work hard on expression, comfort and beauty of language art. As tour guides attach great importance to “on-site effect”, translation standards should pay more attention to “reach” in order to conform to the professional characteristics of tour guides' language, convey information, and better disseminate local history and culture through different translation methods and strategies.

3. Translation Skills of Tour Guide Words

3.1 Translation of Scenic Spots

3.1.1 Name of scenic spots represented in an administrative division.

The most common strategy for translating place names of scenic spots is to use standard Chinese transliteration. This strategy is concise, easy to understand, and can maximize the retention of the pronunciation of the source language words, so as to realize the effective transmission of source language information. For example, Zaozhuang City is translated into Zaozhuang City, Taierzhuang District is translated into Taierzhuang District, Yixian County is translated into Yi County, etc.

3.1.2 Names of scenic spots named after family names

When translating the names of such scenic spots, we can adopt the strategy of transliteration before explanatory translation. For example, Xie Yuda Tea Store can be transliterated first and then explained as “Xie Yuda” is a trade name.

3.1.3 Names of religious-related attractions

When translating the names of such scenic spots, translators should grasp their inherent meanings or allusions and legends so as to facilitate tourists' understanding and effective transmission of information. Imperial Hall of Guan Yu is the translation of Guandi Temple in Taierzhuang Ancient City Tour Guide, while Goddess Tai Mount Temple is the translation of Niangniang Temple in Mount Taishan. Translators all adopt the strategy of transliteration plus free translation. Wenchang Pavilion is the same, translated as Wenchang Attic. Wenchang Pavilion is a sacred place for worshipping Confucian sages. It is the same as the Wen Temple in Qufu, Shandong Province. It advocates the most traditional Confucian ideology and culture of the Chinese nation. Translators deal with it directly by transliteration. The cultural connotation of Chongwen Pavilion, a culture-loaded word, is lost. It is suggested that it be translated into The Confucian Pavilion.

3.1.4 Names of scenic spots related to myths and legends

The connotation of myths and legends should be conveyed to the target language as far as possible, with emphasis on cultural correspondence, and sometimes compensation translation strategies can be adopted. There is an “old well” in Guandi Temple of the ancient city of Taierzhuang. It has a history of more than 100 years. Before liberation, there was a legend of money flowing in it. Ancient wells sometimes circulate money several times a year, sometimes only once a year, mostly for making money, copper leather, etc., which attracted many people to pick up. Fortunately, I was lucky to grab a handful and take it home. When I opened my hand, I saw that it

was only one or two. It is quite amazing that this ancient well rises in drought to relieve disasters and flows money to help the poor in times of hardship. In order to convey the legendary color of Old Well, we can translate it literally into “old well” and then add it. The further explanation is: This well flew water to alleviate disasters in dry weather and flew money to help the poor. How magical it is!

3.1.5 Names of scenic spots for tourism development

Scenic spots for tourism development are usually carefully built for the development of tourism. Translation of such scenic spots should be based on shaping and publicizing local scenic spots. Great Victory of Taierzhuang Battle was the victory of the Chinese nation's United anti-Japanese war. Foreign journalists have highly appraised the significance of the Taierzhuang War. Robert Capa, a well-known war correspondent, wrote: “There are many names of small towns as turning points in history - Waterloo, Gettysburg, Verdun. Today, a new name - Taierzhuang has been added.” Fifty-three World War II sites have been preserved in the Taierzhuang War Site. These war relics are the only large-scale preservation of World War II sites in the world. The existence of these relics has injected a heavy historical foundation into the restoration and construction of Taierzhuang ancient city. The corresponding English translation of Taierzhuang Battle Site Park is “Taierzhuang Battle Site Park”. The translator has grasped its cultural connotation and historical significance in this way.

3.2 Translation of Place Names and River Names in Tour Guide Words

There are many names of places and rivers in Taierzhuang Ancient City Tourist Guide. Transliteration is directly used to translate these words. Transliteration is also used in the translation of river names, in addition to the exclusive English words of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River. Examples are as follows:

Example 1: “The Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal winds down from Beijing to Hangzhou, crossing five major river systems, namely, Haihe River, Yellow River, Huaihe River, Yangtze River and Qiantang River. It runs through Beijing, Tongzhou, Tianjin, Hebei (Cangzhou), Shandong (Dezhou, Linqing, Liaocheng, Jining), Jiangsu (Xuzhou, Huaian, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Wuxi, Changzhou and Suzhou). Zhejiang (Huzhou, Hangzhou) 6 provincial governors, a total length of 1794 km. The Great Jing-hang Canal winds down from Beijing to Hangzhou, across the five drainages which are Hai River, Yellow River, Huai River, the Yangtze River and the Qian Tang River; through six provinces and cities which are Beijing, Tong Zhou, Tianjin, Hebei (Cangzhou), Shandong (Dezhou, Linqing, Liaocheng, Jining), Jiangsu (Xuzhou, Huaian, Yangzhou, Wuxi, Changzhou, Suzhou), Zhejiang (Huzhou, Hangzhou) and its total length is 1794 kilometers.

3.3 Translation of Four-character Words in Tour Guide Words

Four-character words are a common linguistic phenomenon in tour guides' words. They are composed of four morphemes, which are usually divided into free phrases and fixed phrases. Four-character words are especially appealing because of their long-term habits, concise forms, incisive meanings, relatively stereotyped and implicit meanings. Examples of translation methods are as follows:

3.3.1 Translate a four-character word into an English word

When a part of Chinese four-character phrases are translated into English, only one word is enough to express its meaning.

Example 1: “便利的交通使经济,文化空前的繁荣昌盛”. The four-word word “繁荣昌盛” can be expressed in one word “prosperity” in English.

Example 2: “这三个字写的是才华横溢” can be translated as “the three words were written brilliantly” in this way when interpreting. The four words “才华横溢” can be expressed directly in an English adverb “brilliantly”.

3.3.2 Free translation of four-character words

Free translation refers to the expression of the original meaning without the restriction of words and sentence structures in the original text. If retaining the form of the original makes the translation obscure and difficult to understand, the method of free translation can be adopted.

Example 1 忘不了古运河上“一河渔火”，“歌声悠扬”。They can be translated freely according to their Chinese meanings, which are translated as “with the lights on fishing boats” and “melodious singing on the old Grand Canal”.

Example 2 忘不了台儿庄大战“威震四方”。It can be translated as follows: “I’ll never forget grand Taierzhuang Battle shocking the world”.

Example 3 重建后的台儿庄古城古朴典雅,天人合一,集中体现在四个独特的历史文化价值,也是吸引海内外游客前来观光,休闲,度假的四个理由. Translation: “The rebuilt Ancient Town of Taierzhuang is graceful and primitive with perfect union between the heaven and the earth. It has intensively reflected the four unique cultural and historic values of the city, which justify its attractiveness to the tourists both at home and abroad as an ideal destination for sightseeing, leisure and vacation”. The free translation of the four-character words “simple and elegant” and “harmony of man and nature” is carried out.

3.3.3 Four-character words can be transliterated and explained first.

Example: Xiaobeimen is called “承恩湛露”. It means that thanks to God's grace, we can enjoy the deep dews. “承恩湛露” is translated as “Cheng'enzhanlu”, suggesting the grace of the Heavenly God and the enjoyment of the deep dews. It not only embodies the beauty of rhythm of Chinese characters, but also accurately conveys the meaning.

3.4 Translation of Metrics

In Taierzhuang Ancient City Tour Guide Words, there are ancient words such as “Zhang”, which require interpreters to explain to foreign tourists that a Zhang is about several meters. Otherwise, visitors will be confused by the words like “monk Zhang Er has no idea”. Examples are as follows: “修筑城内外三十余丈,楼基十余丈,费巨而省,工艰而速” can be translated into:

“Building more than 30 zhang(a unit of length in ancient China,1 zhang equals to about 3.3 meters)from inside to outside, the foundation of the building is 10 zhang, spending small money and build quickly”

3.5 Translation of couplets in tour guides

Antithetical couplets are a unique literary and artistic form of the Chinese language and an important part of the ancient traditional cultural heritage. There are many kinds of couplets, also known as 楹联, 楹贴. In addition to the “Spring Festival couplets” posted on the door, there are also couplets of congratulations and longevity couplets. The root of the difficulty in translating couplets lies in the dialectical unity of content and form. To make the couplets faithful to the original couplets, translators must make a comparison between the two languages and cultures, handle cultural images flexibly, convey the meaning and artistic conception of the original text as far as possible, and take meaning as the priority in translation. Following: Take the couplets in Taierzhuang Ancient City Tour Guide as examples:

Example1: Couplet couplet “当知听思聪,岂可耳无闻”.The couplet means because of the sound of the bell people can become very clever, don't you hear it? The translation of it is free-translated in the light of context.

Example 2: Couplet couplet”结五万春花,奏雅宣和,无戾风骚成杰构;谱大千秋色,镂金错彩,有禅世教既奇观”. If you look at this couplet alone, you will be confused. Translated in combination with context there are two meanings: one is the sculpture and painting of the building are very beautiful, looks like fifty thousand flowers bloom; the other is the plays lead people to a good life and good health.

Example 3: Couplet couplet “ 响遏行云,一曲笙簧欣乐利;歌翻白雪,八方舞蹈荷升平”. The

translation of the couplet is also interpreted freely: means “the bright music makes clouds stop and listen, people use bright music to congratulate the scene of live and work in peace and contentment; singing the elegant music composition, people sing the praise of the restful life”.

The couplets appearing in the tour guide's words are translated freely, which can better convey information. This also puts forward higher requirements for tour guides. They should have profound cultural background and be able to deal with the situation in time when interpreting on the spot.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of Chinese-English interpretation of tour guides is to enable foreign tourists to have a better understanding of local history and culture while enjoying the scenery. In order to meet the requirements of translation, it is necessary to flexibly select suitable translation methods and techniques. According to the characteristics of tour guide translation, more attention should be paid to the popularity and comprehensibility in interpretation.

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