

## Status Quo Review and Developing Trend on English Translation for Chinese Cultural Classics

Zhihui Man

Teaching and Research Institute of Foreign Languages, Bohai University, Jinzhou, 121013, China

amandalove41@163.com

**Keywords:** Chinese cultural classics; English translation; status quo review; developing trend

**Abstract:** Classics are the generic term for important documents in ancient time. The essence of Chinese traditional culture is contained in the classics. The English translation of classics plays an important role in promoting Chinese culture and world cultural exchanges. Through the induction and reorganization of a large number of related literature at home and abroad, this paper analyzes the current situation of English translation of Chinese cultural classics, and combines the latest research results in the field of translation at home and abroad to propose the development trend of English translation of Chinese cultural classics, including five aspects: artificial intelligence translation in combination with human translation, continue to enrich and improve the "Greater China Library", build the Chinese-English corpus for Chinese cultural classics, translate Chinese cultural classics based on ethics, and cooperate extensively with domestic and foreign translation communities.

### 1. Introduction

"Culture is the blood of the nation and the spiritual home of the people." The long history of the Chinese nation for thousands of years contains the profound traditional culture. Chinese excellent traditional culture is the fundamental creativity of Chinese civilization. It has been preserved through practice, time and merit preferential. It is the culture that can be reserved for a long time. Chinese excellent traditional culture is the foundation and soul of the Chinese nation. It reflects the unique thinking mode and spiritual identity of the Chinese nation. It plays an important role in promoting national progress and social development, and it also carries the great contribution of Chinese civilization to world civilization. The policies and development strategies formulated by the Chinese government in the political, economic, military, and diplomatic fields all reflect the traditional culture and philosophical thinking of the Chinese nation. Many countries realize that in order to understand China, it is necessary to understand the excellent culture that China has inherited for thousands of years.

Classics are the generic term for important documents in ancient time. The essence of Chinese traditional culture is contained in the classics. The Chinese cultural classics preserved and came down in Chinese characters are as vast as the world's longest and most influential cultural heritage. They are the cultural blood of the Chinese nation and the common spiritual wealth of all people. They not only have important ideological value, but also contains abundant cultural information. The English translation of Chinese cultural classics has always been an important part of Chinese and Western cultural exchanges, and an important way for the exchanges of Chinese excellent historical culture. The English translation of Chinese cultural classics refers to the language activity that translates Chinese cultural classics into English and accurately and completely reproduces Chinese cultural classics in English. The development of Chinese translation of Chinese classics has built the bridge of communication for the world to understand Chinese long and splendid history and culture.

The English translation of classics plays an important role in promoting Chinese culture and promoting world cultural exchanges. Chinese society has entered a new era, raised the level of cultural openness, expanded foreign cultural exchanges, strengthened international communication

capabilities and the construction of a foreign discourse system, and promoted Chinese culture to the world. Without translation, Chinese culture going out is empty talk. However, the current Chinese cultural communication, as well as the influence of Chinese culture on the world, is in stark contrast to the connotation and brilliance of Chinese culture itself. Therefore, transcending cultural barriers, intensifying efforts to translate Chinese classics and promoting Chinese culture to go abroad. China has many classics that reflect the essence of traditional culture. This is a masterpiece to promote Chinese culture to go out. In this context, research is carried out to translate Chinese culture abroad, to correct foreigners' misunderstanding of Chinese culture and Chinese people, and to enable the world to understand Chinese traditional culture more accurately. This will consolidate Chinese inherent national cultural identity and enhance Chinese international status, create a good international environment for economic construction, and enrich the world culture to have important practical significance.

## **2. Status Quo Review on English Translation for Chinese Cultural Classics**

Through the collation and analysis of a large number of relevant literature at home and abroad, the research status of English translation of Chinese cultural classics is summarized as follows: before the 20th century, the external communication of Chinese classic works was mainly carried out by foreign missionaries in China. There are not many Chinese people. Regrettably, Western translators may have other purposes in translating Chinese cultural classics. In addition, due to the influence of their cultural positions and social ideology, the translation process will consciously carry out cross-cultural manipulation, resulting in Chinese cultural classics. Distortion during the process of translation. In recent years, English translation of classics has become a branch of translation studies, and it has received more and more attention from academic circles. In the 21st century, cultural exchanges between China and the West have deepened, and more Chinese cultural classics will be translated into the English-speaking world. Many scholars are engaged in English translation studies of Chinese classics. A group of classical translation experts and scholars represented by Professor Wang Rongpei have done a lot of solid and meticulous work in the theoretical research and practical exploration of English translation of Chinese classics, which has effectively promoted academic development and talent cultivation in this field. In order to promote the exchange and development of Chinese culture, the China Press and Publication Administration organized the translation of the "Greater China Library" by scholars and translators at home and abroad at the end of the 20th century, and established exchanges and enhancements for scholars interested in the translation and research of classics. At present, the contents of the English translation of Chinese classics are summarized into eleven categories: the study of English translation of Chinese classics, the study of English translation of minority books, the study of English translation of Chinese philanthropy, and the translation of Chinese classics by a certain theory. Research on analysis, translation of English translations of certain Chinese classics, research on translation methods or strategies, research on translators, research on translation criticism, research on English translation of texts and textbooks, research on computer-assisted translation of Chinese classics, The English translation of Chinese classics is a study of Chinese classics.

The English translation of classics has shown a gratifying development trend in China. Translation studies, as an interdisciplinary research field, has attracted more and more scholars' attention. Many masters of classics have made many contributions in this respect. More and more experts and scholars have also conducted in-depth research on the theories and methods of English translation of classics. The achievements are mainly in the following three aspects: first, the combination of academic and extensive, the breadth and depth of the translation studies of classics are constantly moving forward and rising to the height of the national cultural strategy. Second, the vigorous development of translation and research of national classics helps to establish a complete "Chinese studies" and also helps other countries to fully understand Chinese cultural history and national characteristics. Third, the translation and research of traditional classics continues to deepen, and find new resources in literary theory, poetic theory, literary history and translation history, which makes the translation and research of literary classics a new look. While gaining

world-renowned achievements, it also faces many problems, mainly in the following four aspects: first, the selection of materials is relatively simple, mostly concentrated in classical literary works, many non-literary classics and ethnic minority texts have not been translated. Second, the theory and practice are out of touch. Most of the English translation practitioners do not engage in theoretical research, and theoretical researchers basically do not engage in translation practice. Third, there is no effective channel for external communication. The Chinese translation of Chinese classics under the auspices of Chinese translators is not satisfactory. Fourth, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding and profound understanding of the history of Chinese civilization. The selection of materials is not good enough and the evaluation is not objective enough.

### **3. Developing Trend on English Translation for Chinese Cultural Classics**

Through the analysis of the status quo of English translation of Chinese cultural classics, combined with the latest research results in the field of translation at home and abroad, the development trend of English translation of Chinese cultural classics is summarized as follows:

(1) Combine artificial intelligence translation and human translation. Human translation is a very complex intelligent activity involving language conversion, meaning expression and contextual culture, which takes a lot of time and effort. Artificial intelligence is a new technical science that combines many theories of computer linguistics, mathematical logic and artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence translation is a technique that converts a natural source of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and full text into another target language. Compared with human translation, machine translation has the advantages of high speed, high efficiency and no fatigue. Under specific rule settings, the translation software performs language conversion based on the corpus, which enables a large number of translations to be completed in a short period of time. Machine translation is not subject to time and place constraints. For low-difficult single-sentence and phrase translations, there are no low-level mistakes such as spelling errors. The level of artificial intelligence translation is rapidly advancing and is growing faster than people expected. Artificial intelligence translation allows people to devote more energy and time to engaging in creative and meaningful activities. The current level of artificial intelligence translation is still far from people's expectations. There are problems such as translation machinery, bluntness and poor overall matching. The machine can only replace the part of the translation with relatively simple syntax and structure and low requirements for translation results. The artificial intelligence translation market has great potential, and the future can be compared with human translation. At this stage, it is a good solution for human translation to modify some inaccurate machine translations.

(2) Continue to enrich and improve the "Greater China Library". The "Greater China Library" (Chinese-English) project is the first major national publishing project in Chinese history to systematically introduce foreign language versions of Chinese cultural classics to the world, from pre-Qin to modern culture, history, philosophy, economics, military, science and technology. The most representative classic works are selected, and the experts select and collate the selected questions and versions in detail, from ancient Chinese into vernacular, and then from vernacular to English. The overall planning, the choice of authority, the accurate translation of English translation, and the perfection of the system represent China's academic, publishing and translation level. It enriches the Chinese civilization for 5,000 years and can explain China to the world. As a cultural publishing project that will have an important impact on the history of cultural exchanges and reflect the level of national publishing, the Chinese-English version of the "Greater China Library" has the following characteristics: First, overall planning, careful selection of bibliography, and comprehensive display Cultural engineering of Chinese ancient culture and large-scale English translation of Chinese classics. Secondly, in order to promote the national culture on a global scale and facilitate the learning and research of English readers, the Chinese-English contrasting layout is adopted. Some of the more difficult ancient classics are also used in addition to the Chinese-English comparison. Third, pay attention to the authoritativeness and scientific nature of the selected version. The selected version is generally a passbook, and the relevant experts, scholars, or original

translators should be re-revised and reviewed. Some classic works should be re-translated by experts at home and abroad. The readers of the world provide authoritative English translations.

(3) Construct the corpus of English translation of Chinese cultural classics. The important factor in translation is understanding and expression. First, you must understand the original text, and the translation can be expressed. For Chinese translators, how to provide accurate translations is a difficult translation. Traditional human translation methods and Chinese-English translation tools have great limitations and are increasingly unable to adapt to the translation needs of the information age. The corpus refers to a large-scale electronic text library that is scientifically sampled and processed. It can effectively assist translators to express relatively accurate translations during the translation process, provide a large number of words, phrases, and even sentence pattern translations, and promote the development of translation theory. Breakthrough in translation thinking and improve translation efficiency. At the same time, the corpus can provide rich language materials in the translation process to help translators improve accuracy and enrich translation content. The translated Chinese cultural classics are valuable treasures and have important reference and reference. Constructing the English translation of Chinese cultural classics and storing the essence of English translation of Chinese cultural classics provides a new way to study the translation and exchanges of Chinese culture in Chinese classics. The future trend of corpus is reflected in five aspects: first, standardization, corpus collection and processing, information management and user functions, etc.; second, enlargement, expanding capacity, richer content; third, multi-modality, except the text, it also includes voice and image; the fourth is intelligence, automatically updating the corpus and automatically culling the corpus; the fifth is network, the corpus source network, the corpus use network and the corpus mark network.

(4) Translate Chinese cultural classics based on ethics. Ethics is the ethical principle that people get along with others. It is ethics that there is no action that harms the physical and mental of others. Translation, as a cultural exchange activity between people, is not static, isolated and closed. It is inevitably restricted by various social norms in interpersonal relationships, and cannot be separated from the constraints of theoretical morality. In the translation, the translator is guided by certain values consciously or unconsciously, and has a personal translation ethical thought. Therefore, the grasp of ethics mainly depends on the translator's subjective initiative. In the process of translation, we must first follow the principles of ethics and morality, respect the traditional culture of the target language country, fully understand the social culture and historical background of the target language country, and fully follow the ethics. moral. The success of translation work is based on the full grasp of ethical principles. The following strategies should be used for the translation of Chinese cultural classics based on ethics: first, translation is carried out in accordance with the translation process required by translation ethics. Second, grasp the scale of cultural transformation and choose the appropriate translation ethics. Third, highlight the main role of translators in following and choosing translation ethics. This requires translators to rely on the principle of translation in the translation of Chinese cultural classics, respect the cultural differences between China and the West, grasp the scale of cultural transformation, select appropriate translation ethics, and play a subjective role in following and selecting translation ethics. Thereby achieving the effective dissemination of Chinese traditional culture.

(5) Extensively cooperate between domestic and foreign translation communities. With the vigorous development of economic globalization and the intensified cultural penetration of different regions, the exchanges and cooperation between the translation communities of various countries have also developed. After Chinese reform and opening up, it began to communicate with foreign counterparts. The theoretical and practical research on the translation of classics is behind that of western developed countries. Although foreign advanced translation theories have been introduced to China in recent years, the problem of digestion and absorption has not been ideal. In particular, some intractable understanding still adheres to the translation tradition, and pursues the "faithfulness" as the ultimate goal, ignoring the cross-translation of translation. Discipline and cross-disciplinary development. With the continuous deepening of China's opening up to the outside world, cultural exchanges and cooperation with the world will become a new normal of cultural

development. The advanced translation theories and practical methods of various countries will continue to be infiltrated and integrated, and will certainly usher in a field of translation. The great prosperity period. From the translation of ancient Buddhist scriptures to today's transactional translation, cooperative translation has always been an important way in the field of translation. Cooperative translation focuses on translation practice. It aims to ensure the quality of translation, shorten the translation time as much as possible, and speed up the publishing cycle. It is a commonly used translation method. Chinese cultural classics translation can also use cooperative translation. Decompose the larger workload to different translators, and use the advantages of each translator on the basis of common principles and standards, and provide each level in cooperative translation, which has higher efficiency and quality than a single translator.

#### 4. Conclusion

With the continuous deepening of reform and opening up policy, China has made great progress in all aspects of economy, politics and culture. The Chinese nation is rising and its influence in the world is constantly expanding. Chinese culture books carry a rich history and culture, and translation is like a bridge connecting China and the world. The vast Chinese cultural classics are the crystallization of ancient Chinese civilization and an important part of world civilization. The people of all countries in the world should share this wealth. Letting Chinese culture go out and realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream of the Chinese nation since modern time. The realization of this dream is a glorious and arduous undertaking for the translators of classics. From the perspective of translators and communicators, this paper solves the future development direction of English translation of cultural classics, and promotes Chinese culture and promotes Chinese cultural classics to the world.

#### References

- [1] C. J. Zhao, Y. C. Liu, "The present situation, problems and future perspectives of translation and research of Chinese Classics," *Journal of Yanshan University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 60-65, 2014.
- [2] Y. P. Xu, "Analysis of the Application Prospect of Artificial Intelligence Translation," *Co-Operative Economy & Science*, vol. 34, no. 19, pp. 78-81, 2018.
- [3] Y. Yao, "Research on Translation of Chinese Classics from the Perspective of Translation Ethics," *Journal of Weinan Normal University*, vol. 33, no. 14, pp. 64-69, 2018.
- [4] Y. Zhang, "An Interpretation of Chinese and Western Translation Theories and Its Development Trend," *Journal of Baoshan University*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 36-39, 2016.
- [5] Y. Sun, Z. S. Li, "The Direction and Trend of the Development of Classics Translation: Take the 8th national conference on classics translation for example," *Journal of Yanshan University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 95-98, 2014.
- [6] W. Y. Xu, "On the Significance of English Translation of Chinese Classical Works," <https://www.xzbu.com/9/view-7332872.htm>, 2018-12-1.
- [7] X. H. Jiang, "Translation Ethics and Translator's Language Service Consciousness," [http://www.sohu.com/a/152094734\\_651640](http://www.sohu.com/a/152094734_651640), 2018-12-1.
- [8] H. Wang, Y. C. Mei, "The Study of the English Translation of China's Classics that Enters into the Western Academic Circle," *Foreign Language and Literature Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 78-84, 2017.
- [9] Y. B. Li, "On the Creation of Wang Rongpei Open Classics English Corpus," *The Guide of Science & Education*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 153-154, 2016.