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ON C-E TRANSLATION OF TCM TERMINOLOGY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHINESE CULTURE GOING-OUT POLICY

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ABSTRACT

With the propaganda and promotion of Chinese medicine culture during the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, Chinese medicine has once again entered the international vision. And yet, in the process of TCM's foreign publicity, different factors hinder the better diffusion of TCM culture. This paper objectively analyzes the current problems existing in TCM terminology translation and then focuses on different characteristics of local Chinese medicine culture for target groups under the Chinese culture going-out perspective. In the end, we are trying to come up with four translation strategies to improve the quality and accuracy of the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terms. We hope to take this opportunity to achieve TCM culture going-out.

KEYWORDS: TCM Terminology; Chinese Culture Going-out Policy; Translation Problems; Translation Methods.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is rooted in Chinese traditional culture. It is also an important part of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation. Under the impact of modern medicine and science, the development and transmission of Chinese medicine has been difficult. However, with the successful conclusion of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, the power of Chinese medicine behind the Winter Olympics has once again entered the international vision.

Chinese medicine is a unique, complex and huge system. Its terminology is concise and concentrated, which requires a high level of translators. Therefore, in the translation process, how to spread the cultural connotation of the source language effectively and accurately is a very important link. At present, the translation texts of TCM terms are multifarious and disorderly, and the translation of TCM terminology is one of the main means of TCM culture communication.

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Therefore, the translation of the term is a difficult point in the transmission process. Based on the analysis of the four causes of the current situation, this paper takes the Chinese culture going out policy as the starting point, and takes the representative texts of traditional Chinese medicine as an example to put forward four translation strategies to optimize the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terms, achieve the purpose of the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture, and promote foreign exchanges.

2. Current Situation and Causes of Chinese Medicine Terminology Translation Research

2.1 Current Situation of Translation Research in Chinese Medicine

In recent decades, with the deepening of the national strategy of “Chinese culture going-out” of TCM culture, TCM translation studies have attracted more and more attention and the types of Chinese-English translation texts about TCM culture have increased, and the ways and methods of translation have also shown a tendency of diversification. However, there are still many shortcomings in the translation of TCM terms in China, such as mistranslation, omission, substitution of Chinese Pinyin for English and lack of a complete theoretical system. At the same time, due to the lack of professional knowledge of TCM, the translated texts are often strongly subjective and cannot be accurately understood by readers. To some extent, the cultural characteristics contained in the terminology are ignored, which weakens the effect of external publicity.

Based on the above problems, this paper takes the "going-out" of traditional Chinese medicine culture as the starting point, studies the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terms, understands the current situation and shortcomings of terminology translation at this stage, analyzes the four major reasons of society, government, industry and personal level of translators, and puts forward corresponding countermeasures.

2.2 Analysis of the Causes of the Current Situation

2.2.1 Affected by the Society

The main audience of Chinese medicine halls in China is Chinese people, so the language is mainly catered to the national population, using the most familiar Chinese language. Although the holding of the Winter Olympics has allowed foreign friends to experience the wonders of TCM, and the wave of enthusiasm that set off brought TCM into the public eye once again. However, due to the epidemic, the people's travel has been restricted, and the opportunity to enter the Chinese medicine hall for visit has also decreased. For foreigners, with strict jurisdictions and long quarantine periods abroad, the idea of visiting a TCM center would fade with the long wait. The singularity of the audience does not motivate the person in charge of the TCM hall to increase the number of other presentations needed to introduce TCM. The small number of foreigners visiting TCM halls in China and the language barrier prevent them from understanding TCM and thus from promoting the spread of TCM culture internationally.

2.2.2 Affected by the Government

First of all, the government's efforts to promote the translation of TCM cultural terms are insufficient. Most of the introductions in TCM museums are only in Chinese, and there are few translations of TCM in other languages such as English, Japanese and Korean. Secondly, TCM terminology translation talent is scarce. Generally speaking, the process of learning TCM is very long, and a qualified TCM practitioner needs at least five or more years of study. Moreover, Chinese medicine places special emphasis on practical experience, there is no fixed treatment for diseases, and its treatment is not immediate. However, modern people pursue quick success and short-term profits, and there are not many people who are willing to learn Chinese medicine, so it is extremely scarce to understand the terminology, connotation and translation of Chinese medicine. If a foreign visitor interested in TCM wants to search for related content on the Internet, he can only find Chinese explanations of TCM, which is very difficult for foreign visitors who do not speak Chinese to understand the content conveyed and it will make foreign visitors feel confused.

2.2.3 Affected by the Industry

The theories of TCM translation are complicated and lack a complete theoretical system, so it often leads to confusion and lack of unified standards in translation. For example, when translating the term "三焦", there are several versions: 1. three warmers; 2. three heaters; 3. triple energizer, etc.^[2] This is also very common when translating the names of TCM diseases. This is also very common when translating the names of TCM diseases, such as "消渴降糖法" is translated as "reducing blood-sugar for diabetes" and "reducing blood-sugar for wasting and thirst disorder".^[3] This makes it easy to cause confusion to foreign readers when spreading Chinese medicine abroad. In addition, due to the lack of theoretical guidance, problems such as mistranslation and omission may occur, for example, "清热" is translated as "relieve inflammation", which is a typical mistranslation. The word "清热" literally means "消炎 (Anti-inflammatory)", and it is one of the eight methods of Chinese medicine, which refers to the treatment method of using cold medicine to clear the fiery heat. In TCM, "热" is a disease evil, generally translated as "pathogenic heat", and "清热" as a TCM term should be translated as "heat clearing".^[4]

2.2.4 Affected by Personal Level of Translators Themselves

Chinese medicine to English translation is a difficult process, because TCM covers the knowledge of medicine, philosophy, history and other disciplines, it is like an extremely rich encyclopedia. There are many terms in the language of Chinese medicine, which are obscure and difficult to understand, and it is impossible to find corresponding words in English. These questions are very demanding on the personal level of translators, but most translators now have uneven abilities, making it difficult to accurately and effectively translate TCM terminology. Therefore, the translator's understanding of the connotation of TCM terms is very important to his translation of TCM terms. However, many translators translate TCM terms only according to the written meaning of the terms through the direct

translation method, without understanding the connotation of TCM terms. For example, the translation of "失笑散" as "powder for lost smiles" is wrong. In fact, "失笑散" is not a medicine for losing smiles after use, but a medicine so effective that one cannot help but smile after using it, so the correct translation should be "Sudden Smile Powder". In addition, in order to accommodate the readers, the translator will directly translate the interpretation of the term, but this practice not only makes the translation appear long and complicated, but also abandons the characteristics of Chinese medicine terminology, which is concise and metaphorical, and loses the characteristics of Chinese medicine culture. The above translation methods not only reflect the translator's personal level, but also may mislead the Chinese medical culture when spreading to foreigners, which may damage the image of China in the minds of foreigners.

3. Research on Translation Methods of TCM Terminology in the background of Chinese Culture Going-out Policy

3.1 Government and Society Promote All-around TCM Translation through Multiple Channels

At the level of government, firstly, introducing policies to attract and encourage people from different industries, nationalities and countries to take part in the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terminology is the most important thing they can do. And then, policies such as training excellent translators and translation teams and establishing a pool of talents for translating traditional Chinese medicine culture will be much easier to reached. Secondly, employing discrete translators is a good way to improve the professionalism and reasonableness of terminology translation. At the same time, government can improve the bilingual corpus of traditional Chinese medicine culture, employ scholars in the relevant translation direction to review the translation, correct translation errors regularly, and create a good international development environment for the "going out" of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

At the social level, it can promote the online dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture. Firstly, in the face of the epidemic situation, it is a good idea to promote the construction of the domestic network virtual Chinese medicine center with English translation and English explanation video, so that foreigners can visit the Chinese medicine hall without leaving the country. Secondly, the modern network is developing rapidly, so the government can make use of the development of new media, through the popular film, television and animation to tell Chinese medicine stories in English, while providing rich basic materials for the establishment of traditional Chinese medicine corpus. Thirdly, in order to enhance the international influencing factors of academic journals of traditional Chinese medicine, and promote the "going out" of academic journals on traditional Chinese medicine, translate and popularize the latest research results of traditional Chinese medicine in the first place, creating an excellent platform for academic quality of traditional Chinese medicine culture is also a good idea.

3.2 Changing the Current Situation of the Industry according to the Actual Demand

The relevant departments should perfect the theoretical system of traditional Chinese medicine translation according to the actual demand and the present situation of the industry. Firstly, in order to speed up the development of medical translation language, an extensive investigation and in-depth analysis of the general public and medical related workers is something should be done. Secondly, some terms that may exist in many translation versions should be reviewed again and again to identify a uniform and accurate industry translation standard. Thirdly, it's helpful to obtain the correct theoretical guidance and formulate the construction plan of medical translation service targeted through consulting the experts in the field of medicine. Fourthly, government should focus on the training of medical translation talents, so as to avoid the problems of mistranslation and missed translation. In addition, with the help of artificial intelligence technology rising in recent years, and the perfection of medical theory system and correct theoretical guidance, government can develop products for medical translation, such as various diagnostic robots, Internet medical translation or overseas medical translation guidance tools. In a word, it is necessary to solve the existing industry problems one by one and change the current situation of the industry.

3.3 Standardizing the Criteria and Proposing Corresponding Translation Methods

3.3.1 Macro Methods for Translation of TCM Terminology

At present, domestication and foreignization have become the two mainstream translation strategies in China's translation industry. Their focus and the effectiveness of transmitting information is different, which has different benefits for the development of culture.

We should analyze the translation results under different translation strategies from surface meanings to inner meanings, and then go deeper into cultural communication to produce high-quality translations and efficiently convey the deep meaning of the text.

① Domestication

Domestication, in which language is regarded as a tool of communication in theory, emphasizes the fluency of the translation in practice, so that the reader of the translation reads it as if it were a native creation. The translator tries his best to reduce cultural differences to make translation smooth and natural. In 1995, in *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* the famous American translation theorist Venuti L. pointed out that domestication is based on ethnocentrism, adapting the foreign text to the cultural values of the translated language and bringing the author home.^[1] In other words, the translator should be far from the author and close to the reader, from the reader's point of view, and close to the reader's way of thinking and language habits, which is the definition of domestication. Therefore, it is important to localize the source language, put the reader at the center, and translate in a way that readers of the target language are accustomed to. The translator has to express what the author wants to say in the local language, and this domestication can better help the reader understand the translation.

② Foreignization

Foreignization, in effect, is transposition. The translator tries to preserve the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the original language, so that the reader can understand the characteristics of the foreign language, in order to complement and enrich the expression of the national language. In *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, Venuti L. suggests that “foreignization is the deliberate breaking of the conventions of the target language in a translation to preserve the exoticism of the source language”. Foreignization means that the translator should be close to the author, from the author's point of view, retain the characteristics of the original language, and be close to the author's way of thinking and language habits. This translation method preserves the exotic nature of the language while also emphasizing the importance of the source language. When translating certain TCM cultural terms, the use of foreignization method helps to convey the true cultural connotation they carry to the international community and avoids the loss of their cultural imagery and intrinsic meaning in the communication process.

The choice of translation strategy is not either-or, but requires a comprehensive consideration of all aspects of the textual context and other circumstances to select the translation strategy appropriately. Translators need to deeply understand the source language and ensure the transmission of the cultural connotation of the source language. At the same time, translators also need to think differently and put themselves in the perspective of the culture importing country. Above all, we should ensure the acceptance and the readability of the translation among the target language readers. In conclusion, the selection and application of translation strategies should be made from a macro perspective. The translation of TCM requires a combination of domestication and foreignization.

3.3.2 Micro Methods for Translation of TCM Terminology

The selection of translation strategies is not arbitrary. It should be placed in a macro perspective to oversee the translation process and also in a micro perspective to balance the meaning. It is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of these TCM terms and choose translation strategies carefully. To do that, we need select appropriate translation methods and techniques according to the purpose and meaning of communication.

3.3.2.1 Application of Domestication

① Paraphrase

In many cases, due to the cultural differences between China and the West, the expression of the language differs greatly, and words with cultural color in the source language cannot find corresponding words to express them, and the above-mentioned methods cannot express their original cultural color, so the paraphrase is used. For example, “活血化癥” is a common TCM terminology meaning “改善循环，化解淤滞”，so it should be translated as “to promote vascular circulation and relieve pain”, and “养阴” is often translated as “nourish the body fluids and secretions of vital essence”.

② Borrowing

In the process of translation, there are terms with clear semantics but irregular wording, so it is necessary to adopt the borrowing of western medical professional words to translate them, so that the Chinese medical vocabulary with cultural background can be translated into simple and understandable western medical terms. For example, “寒” has many meanings in Chinese medicine, and the English word “cold” according to *Websters Dictionary* explains cold—naturally without heat, used in ancient and medieval sciences to describe one of the four qualities of the four elements. This interpretation is consistent with the interpretation of “寒” in Chinese medicine, so it can be translated with the help of borrowing. For example, in the case of severe migratory arthritis, the word “白虎历节” can be translated as “severe migratory arthralgia”, which can be more easily understood by readers.

3.3.2.2 Application of Foreignization

① Literal translation

If the TCM disease name corresponds to a unique Western disease name, the TCM disease name is translated directly and the corresponding English Western disease name is enclosed in parentheses. For example, “结石” can be translated as “calculus”, and “壮水之主，以制阳光” can be translated as “enrich the governor of water to restrain the brilliance of yang”. It can be seen that the literal translation can be applied to terms related to the basic theory of TCM, pathological terms, etc.^[5]

② Transliteration

Generally, when translating foreign cultures, it is difficult to find a corresponding word in the native language for translation, so many TCM words are transliterated. In addition, there are many proper names in TCM that reflect Chinese history and cannot be equated with some Western diseases and require separate transliteration to be appropriate. For example, several basic theoretical terms of TCM with special cultural meanings—“气功”(qì gōng)、 “命门”(mìng mén). It can also be seen that this translation strategy is concise, reduces the loss of source expression information in the translation process, and better restores its own information.

3.3.3 Other Methods

① Annotation

Some terms in TCM often have certain cultural overtones, which can be translated directly or transliterated in the first place, and the explanations caused by cultural heterogeneity are placed in the notes. This will not only preserve the cultural color of the original text, but also facilitate the reader's understanding of the original text. For example, “三子养亲汤” can be transliterated and annotated as “Three-Seed Decoction for Relieving Distention and Promoting Digestion.”

② Substitution

When translating, while clarifying the differences between TCM terminology and modern medical terminology, it is also important to understand some similarities or similarities as much as possible. It

is common to translate “便秘” into “constipation” and “牛皮癣” into “psoriasis”. This translation method is often used as an alternative or in specific scenarios.

3.4 Promoting the Improvement of the Translation Corpus of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture

It is imperative to formulate standards for the translation of traditional Chinese medicine culture. Only under the constraints of certain standards and principles can translation results be standardized, instead of various translation versions. Over the past 40 years of opening up, China’s translative innovation achievements have been advancing with each passing day, as well as the development and application of the bilingual corpus. However, some established corpus have common shortcomings, namely, the corpus is still not rich enough and the translation efficiency is low. The naming rules and standards for the translation of TCM are the prerequisite for perfecting cultural transmission, which is conducive to strengthening the communication of characteristic culture, and promoting the standardized translation of TCM, giving full play to the function and open sharing of the information. Therefore, translators should speed up the establishment and improvement of the translation corpus of traditional Chinese medicine culture, solve the problem of inconsistency between translation names and translation methods during the translation process, and cultivate a sense of terminology norms. User groups thereby can find corresponding translations through the corpus of traditional Chinese medicine culture to help them understand the inner meaning of the words.

It is necessary to improve the created Chinese-English bilingual parallel corpus of Chinese medicine terminology and realize the Chinese medicine terminology input by users according to the actual needs of users. Improved corpus should achieve matching the keywords with English translation of multi-version terms, avoiding repeated translation of the same or similar content, thereby greatly improving translation efficiency and automatically generating a corpus with traditional Chinese medicine characteristics. In this way can we achieve fuzzy query and later expansion of the corpus, which is convenient for medical workers or users.

4. CONCLUSION

Traditional Chinese medicine cultural terms have both cultural and scientific characteristics. [6] But when translating, translators can only express one, not both. The accuracy of the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terms is the basis of "going out" of traditional Chinese medicine culture. Therefore, this paper analyzes and studies the normative problems of traditional Chinese medicine terminology translation from the perspective of Chinese culture going-out policy. Meanwhile, we analyze the four main problems in the translation of traditional Chinese medicine cultural terms, namely, society, government, industry and translator's personal level, and puts forward some corresponding translation countermeasures in view of these four aspects. First, the government and the society promote all-around TCM translation through multiple channels. At the same time, the government should change the current situation of the translative industry according to the actual demand, and the industry should standardize the criteria and propose corresponding translation

methods. Last is promoting the improvement of the translation corpus of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

We sincerely hope that these methods providing in this paper will improve the quality and accuracy of the translation of traditional Chinese medicine terms and better promote the "going out" of traditional Chinese medicine culture to create a good international development environment for traditional Chinese medicine culture "going out". At the same time, it can also make Chinese culture and traditional Chinese medicine cultural genes take root in foreign countries by carrying forward the core values of traditional Chinese medicine culture. In conclusion, we hope this paper can provide reference for the relevant departments and units to make decisions so as to realize the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture by promoting the internal inheritance and external innovation of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

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