

Analysis of Teaching Methods of Chinese Classical Literature Translation

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Abstract: Chinese classical literature is very important in the world of books and stories. This paper is about teaching how to translate Chinese classical literature. It examines the challenges in translating these works and suggests effective teaching methods. It also includes specific examples to provide valuable insights for improving the teaching of Chinese classical literature translation.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Translation; Chinese Classical Literature; Theoretical Aspects; Practical Teaching

1. Introduction

Chinese classical literature is really important in the world of books and stories because of its deep cultural roots and amazing artistic accomplishments. As more and more people become interested in Chinese culture and literature all around the world, there's a strong demand for translating Chinese classical literary works. Translation of these works will promote connection between different cultures. It is very important to do researches on teaching the translation of Chinese classical literature for meeting this increasing need and building bridges for people from different cultures to communicate with each other. Translating Chinese classical literary works is one of the most important ways for people from all over the world learning about the wisdom, history, and beauty of Chinese literature. It is essential for helping to keep the legacy of Chinese literature alive by teaching the translation of Chinese classical literature. We can make sure that Chinese classical literature continue to be shared and loved by people from different cultures through teaching students the translation strategies of Chinese classical literature.

2. Theoretical foundation of teaching Chinese classical literature translation

Since these literary works are deeply connected to Chinese history, culture, and artistic traditions, communicative approach is an important theory in teaching translation. The communicative approach promotes students to look through the surface meaning of the original text and explore the cultural and historical contexts in those literary works. After understanding the social, political, and philosophical world of the era when these classic works were created, students will find a whole bunch of cultural references, allusions, and symbolism woven into the texts. Through the understanding of the aesthetic, philosophical and cultural connotations of the original works, students could grasp the communicative purpose of the original texts as well as convey it to the readers from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds if teachers use communicative approach in class. Besides, students could learn the translation methods which achieves the purpose of not only conveying the precise meaning of the original texts but also the connotation and beauty of it so that target language readers will gain the same reaction as the original text readers.

Furthermore, the communicative approach could promote students to pay more attention to the social culture and pragmatic elements of the original works. This includes consideration of culture norms, language habits and aesthetic preference popularly existing in the target language communities as well as their way of shaping the acceptance and explanation methods of translation texts. By meeting the communicative demands and expectations of target language readers and considering social culture elements during the translation process, students could create translations not only precise linguistically but also culturally charming.

3. Features of the Chinese ancient classical works translation

Translation of Chinese ancient classical works has its unique features, which mirrors the historical and cultural connotation of China and also the specific literacy of Chinese literature. Since there are rich culture elements contained in Chinese ancient classical

work, including Chinese ancient values, philosophical thoughts, historical elements as well as ancient social customs, it is important for students to learn that as a translator he must fully understand the culture of ancient China so as to convey culture spirit and feelings in the original works. Besides, the artistic conceptions and metaphors are particular in Chinese ancient classical works, including simile, literary quotations, symbolization and so on, it is important for students to learn that as a translator he must not only keep the precise meaning of those literary elements but also make sure they would be understood and accepted by target language readers. Also, students must learn that translators should represent other literature features in Chinese ancient classical works, including rhythmic beauty of poetry, lyrical elements in prose which present the high literature and art level of Chinese ancient classical works. To achieve a perfect translation, translators must have a deep understanding of ancient Chinese language as well as know how to make conversions among different literary forms including poetry, Ci, verse and so on. Translation of Chinese ancient classical works is complex and challenging, needing translators to have deep literary foundation and cultural attainment.

4. Strategies of teaching Chinese classical literature translation

The strategies of teaching Chinese classical literature translation includes three aspect, that is, integration of literary translation theory and practice, application of multimedia technology in translation teaching as well as integration of translation practice and literary appreciation. Students should be trained to master the language and culture in both original language and target language, in the case of Chinese classical literature translation, students should also master ancient Chinese language, ancient history and culture. Through this, students will be able to understand and convey the special beauty of Chinese classical literature during translation.

4.1 Integration of literary translation theory and practice

Translation practice does not only refer to some assignment after class, but also refer to the internship offered by university-industry cooperation. “Universities has limited translation practice to the assignment on campus, without paying enough attention to offering students opportunities to have internships in real society by building practical internship bases.” [Trans] ^[1]

First of all, the integration of literary translation theory and practice means to guide students to explore how to analyze and put appropriate literary translation theory into the practice of Chinese classical literature translation when facing different literary styles.

Second of all, students should be encouraged to discover the roles of translators in transformation of culture and language, especially when trying to convey ethnic and aesthetic elements. It is important for them to learn how to make creative choices and understand the their responsibilities in the translation process so that they could create a translation not only linguistically precise but also acceptable for target language readers.

Thirdly, students should learn how to overcome the dilemma of keeping the balance between being loyal to the original works and meeting the demands of target language readers.

Through the integration of literary translation theory and practice, students could enhance their abilities of analyzing the original texts and making adjustment in the translation so as to produce high-qualified translations which maintain the original literacy beauty and culture elements.

4.2 Application of multimedia technology

Application of multimedia technology could significantly improve students’ learning experience and understanding of Chinese classical literature translation by employing audio materials, visual materials, CAT software.

The application of audio materials means the use of recordings of reading of Chinese classical literature. By listening to these materials, students will get familiar with the rhythm and intonation in the original works shaping the specific expression and beauty.

The application of visual materials means the use of videos, like movies, TV series and documentaries. They show students the Chinese historical relics, landscapes, ancient Chinese life style relating to Chinese classical literature so that students will have a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical elements in the original works.

The application of visual materials means the use of CAT software like Trados, memoQ, OmegaT and so on, which could offer an online platform where students could complete translation work as a team and share creative ideas. Application of multimedia technology including audio materials, visual materials and CAT software could create a varied learning atmosphere where students will have a deeper understanding of the linguistic features, cultural features and aesthetic features of Chinese classical literature.

Application of “AI technology, students can find a large amount of relevant information and translation data and then pick out the most useful materials so that the qualities and reliability of the translation can be improved.” [Trans] ^[2]

4.3 Integration of translation practice and literary appreciation

Literary appreciation of original works of Chinese classical literature is an effective way for students to improve their translation capacities through appreciating the beauty, stylistic features, rhetorical features, historical elements and culture elements in the original

works. Appreciation of different translation versions of the same piece of Chinese classical literature could help students to critically criticize the translation methods used by different translators while finding out the historical, cultural and personal reasons for different translators to picking different translation strategies.

5. Case analysis of teaching translation of Journey to the West

Translating Journey to the West is a challenging and complex job since it, as one of the Chinese classical literature which has thick historical and cultural connotations, has specific art form and rich mythical elements. “Journey to the West is undoubtedly one of the few successful cases of the exotic canonization process of Chinese classical literature.” [Trans] ^[3]

Students should also learn how make sure the translation will not only be loyal to the original expressions but also understandable and acceptable for target language readers when translating including Chinese traditional myths, Buddhist culture, historical allusions and so on. Meanwhile, Journey to the West is abundant in poems and prose so students should also learn how keep the original art style and literary charms in translation.

Example 1:

“Da Zaohua! Da Zaohua! ”

When teaching students how to translate “Da Zaohua”, which has four meanings in Chinese language, including “the nature”, “create”, “blessing” and “bless sb.”. At the second step, students should figure out why stone Monkey use the phrase “大造化” by reading the context, where it says monkeys have been living in a harsh environment with rain, storm, snow, thunder and so on. As a result, finding a cave where there are tables, chairs, utensils is a blessing for all of them. At the third step, students should choose a phrase that can fully express how grateful monkeys feel about finding this place. At the final step, students picked “We are blessed” from the options of “We are lucky”, “We are fortunate” and “We are blessed”.

Example 2:

“Xiabingxiejiang”

When teaching students how to translate “Xiabingxiejiang”, the first step should be understanding the meaning of it, which is minions. The second step is to figure out what kind of people they really are. According to the expression of “dragon sons and grandsons”, we can see the dragon king is welcoming the Monkey in a high standard by taking his sons and grandsons with him, which makes it impossible that he puts minions by the side of his sons and grandsons. So the students will figure out that instead of referring to minions, it refers to someone important. The last step is to pick out appropriate expressions which could be “royal guards” or “chief generals”.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, translation of Chinese classical literature is to promote culture communication and inherit Chinese literature legacy, while teaching translation of Chinese classical literature is essential in cultivating Chinese classical literature translators. This essay holds the idea that effective teaching methods including integration of literary translation theory and practice, application of multimedia technology and integration of translation practice and literary appreciation.

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