

# A Report on the C-E Translation of Pu'er Tea and Microorganisms from the Perspective of Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory

Mengtian Lu

Yunnan Agricultural University, Kunming 650000, China.

---

**Abstract:** This translation report takes Pu'er Tea and Microorganisms as the object, and explores the translation practice of the first four sections of Chapter 4. The book was co-written by Professor Zhou Hongjie and Professor Gong Jiashun of Yunnan Agricultural University, which introduces the influence of microorganisms on Pu'er tea, and derives a new method and process for making Pu'er tea. Based on the content, language features and characteristics of the Pu'er Tea and Microorganisms, this report explores some of the difficulties encountered in this translation. First of all, it is difficult to convey cultural connotations at the vocabulary level, and the sentence level is difficult to translate due to the differences in expressions between Chinese and English. Second, since the source text is a typical informative text, the translator is required to accurately and faithfully translate the original text during the translation process. Therefore, this report is mainly guided by Eugene Nida's functional equivalence translation theory to solve the translation problems caused by cultural connotation and language expression. Translation methods including "interpretation", "transliteration and annotation", "deletion" and "reconstruction of sentence pattern" are used to analyze the case. The above discussion aims to effectively promote people's understanding of Pu'er tea and microorganisms, and to provide references for the translation practice of culturally characteristic terms and biology in the future.

**Keywords:** Pu'er tea and Microorganisms; Functional Equivalence Theory; Translation Strategies and Methods

---

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Application of the Translation Task

#### 1.1.1 Background and Significance of the Translation Task

Nowadays, Pu'er tea is becoming more and more popular at home and abroad, and enjoys a good reputation all over the world. Therefore, it is more important than ever to promote Pu'er tea and to innovate the original Pu'er tea technology. We all know that microorganisms include bacteria and viruses and play an important role in the production of Pu'er tea.

Pu'er tea, one of the famous Chinese teas, is produced in Yunnan, and its tea culture also originated in Yunnan. From a cultural perspective, translating this book can present the characteristics of Pu'er tea in more detail from a biological perspective, which is conducive to the promotion of Chinese tea culture and Yunnan's regional culture to the world. The report discusses C-E-based translation strategies and the translation methods of culturally loaded words and terms from the perspective of translation. Based on Eugene Nida's functional equivalence translation theory, we can obtain high-quality translation and contribute to the cultural dissemination of Pu'er tea.

#### 1.1.2 Application of the Translation Task

Through the translation of the original text, the translator can not only understand the relationship between microorganisms and Pu'er tea fermentation, but also accumulate specific microbiological terms. Today, when global cultures are increasingly blended, strengthening the translation of tea culture with Chinese characteristics has become an important means to promote cultural exchanges among ethnic minorities. As Yunnan Pu'er tea is becoming more and more popular today, in order to further promote Yunnan Pu'er tea to the world, this study introduces the production technology of Pu'er tea and its innovative technology, allowing readers to appreciate the profound heritage of Yunnan Pu'er tea culture. The

translation of Yunnan Pu'er tea should belong to the category of publicity translation, which can further promote the spread of Pu'er tea culture, and contribute to Yunnan's economic and cultural business exchanges.

## 2. Translation Theories and Strategies Used

### 2.1.1 Theories Used

Any translator, consciously or unconsciously, is guided by some theories (Guo Jianzhong, 2003). Considering that this is a biology book about the relationship between Pu'er tea and microorganisms and there are many cultural loaded words and biological terms which are difficult for foreigners to understand, the translator chose Eugene A. Nida's functional equivalence theory as the guiding theory to help the translator to translate the source text. Then, the translator has read some books and dissertations about his theory. It was first put forward in 1964, and it put the emphasis on the functional equivalence of information instead of the direct formal equivalence in translation. The core concept of Nida's theory is "functional equivalence", which means that the translation does not seek the rigid correspondence on the surface of the text when translating, but achieves a functional equivalence between the two languages.

As far as translation is concerned, the purpose of translation of the source text is not only to let readers know more about the making process of Pu'er tea, but also to further promote Pu'er tea to the world. so this study adopt different translation techniques for different types of texts, striving to achieve equivalence in lexical, sentential, and textual functions.

### 2.1.2 Strategies Used

Foreignization is a translation dedicated to the realization of the source culture. In other words, the translator should try to maintain the cultural style of the original language, so that this exotic sentiment can be spread to readers. American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti once said that foreignization should be close to the author.

The source text is a biological book, which introduces Pu'er tea and microorganisms, and its purpose introduce microorganisms and Pu'er tea fermentation to readers. With this in mind, translators often use domestication in translation. Domestication is to retain the cultural image in the original text in the translation, or translate it literally. The purpose is to maintain the language style of the original text, introduce the original culture to the target readers, and enrich the target language and its culture. However, it is impossible for a text to use only domestication. Of course, translators also use foreignization in translating. Both translation strategies should be used in moderation.

## 3. Case Study

### 3.1 Food proper nouns

**ST:** 液态酿酒新工艺

**TT1:** liquid wine new technology

**TT2:** New liquid brewing process

**Analysis:** The translation of this paragraph adopts the translation method of free translation. The Chinese term "液态酿酒新工艺" is a professional term in the field of food production. The literal translation may make readers not understand what kind of process this is. Liquid brewing actually refers to the process of using grains, potatoes, molasses and other raw materials to ferment and distill into edible alcohol. Then, based on the liquor base produced by liquid fermentation, the liquor is blended and scented to make liquor. In Chinese, there is the word "陈酿" and "陈酿化", which is often translated as "aging" in English. However, the liquid wine process needs to use grains, potatoes, etc. as raw materials. It does not mean simply aging in Chinese. The literal translation of "liquid wine new technology" will make the target readers incomprehensible and impossible. Understand that liquid brewing is a manufacturing process of Chinese liquor. The word "brewing" has the meaning of "酝酿" and "酿造" in both the English-Chinese Dictionary and the Collins Dictionary. The translation of TT2 can better reflect that liquid winemaking is a winemaking process in ancient China, which is closer to the

meaning of the original text. Therefore, for foreign readers, this free translation can make them understand that this is a process of wine making, and there will be no problem in understanding the original article. When the author wrote about the "liquid brewing" process, she also focused more on highlighting this method and process of wine making. Therefore, the new process can also be regarded as a new wine making process. In TT1, the literal translation lost the point that the original author wanted to highlight, that is, the new winemaking process.

**ST: 腌制泡菜**

**TT1: paocai**

**TT2: Kimchi**

**TT3: pickles**

Analysis: This paragraph uses the free translation method and subtracting method. "腌制泡菜" is a unique food in China, and it is a product of fermented lactic acid bacteria with a unique flavor. Originally transliterated directly as "paocai", this translation is sometimes desirable, but it is more difficult to understand for foreign readers without any Chinese background knowledge. "腌制泡菜" should be very similar to "Kimchi" in terms of appearance and taste. This is also the most frequently used word in kimchi translation. But in the dictionary, this word refers specifically to Korean kimchi. If you use this word, it may confuse your target readers. The translation of kimchi in the "New English-Chinese Dictionary" is "pickles", and the word "pickles" itself has the meaning of "咸菜, 腌制物, 各式腌菜". In parallel text comparison, the word "pickles" was used in a paper on kimchi in Jiangsu University. At the same time, kimchi itself is a kind of pickled food, and the word "preserved" is omitted directly by the subtraction method, which will not cause any understanding difficulties for the target readers.

In this article, pickled kimchi probably refers to some local pickles in Yunnan. The direct transliteration in TT1 seems to be the most in line with the original text, but it may also cause difficulties for target readers, especially foreign readers who have no knowledge of Chinese food culture. In TT2, it is translated as "Kimchi". Although the meaning of kimchi is translated, it is roughly equivalent in meaning, but it will cause the target readers to confuse the food mentioned in this article with the special Korean food, and thus raise questions. In contrast, the translation in TT3 is clearer and clearer, and there are parallel texts for reference, allowing the target readers to understand the original author's meaning more clearly.

## **4. Summary**

### **4.1 Gains from the Translation**

Through this translating process, translators have gained a lot from translation. First of all, the translator improves her translation ability through the above-mentioned translation process and translation research. Secondly, during the pre-translation stage of translation, a large number of parallel texts should be referred to prevent mistranslations caused by the incomprehensibility of the original text's content during translation, the translator must choose multiple authoritative dictionaries and conduct "real-time proofreading".

### **4.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Work and Improvement**

After translating the Pu'er Tea and Microbes, the translator found some shortcomings in the translation. First of all, this is the translator's first contact with a biological text, involving a large number of microbiological terms that the translator is not familiar with. There are many things that the translator cannot understand. Some translations are not accurate enough.

The second is that the translator is limited by knowledge, culture and language, lacks the ability to deal with translation difficulties at the linguistic level, and sometimes cannot accurately grasp the huge differences in the language level between Chinese and English. Moreover, with the continuous optimization of translation theory, Nida's functional equivalence translation theory is just the tip of the iceberg, and any translation theory has its advantages and disadvantages. How to better use translation theory to guide translation practice is what translators need to constantly learn and improve.

## References

- [1] Zhao Y. Chinese-English Translation Practice Report of Documentary Pu 'er Tea - Time Singing.2021. Kunming University of Science and Technology, MA Thesis.
- [2] An SS. Three-dimensional Translation of Tea Culture into English from the Perspective of Ecological Translation: A Case Study of Drinking and Tasting Yunnan Pu 'er Tea. *Overseas English*. 18(2018): 11+15.
- [3] A Study on the English translation of Yunnan Pu 'er Tea under the Background of "One Belt and One Road" -- Based on domestication and Foreignization Strategies. *Overseas English*.11(2018):126-127.
- [4] Xu X M. External publicity translation in English translation of Yunnan Pu 'er Tea. *Fujian Tea* 39. 06(2017): 318-319.
- [5] Zhao P, Tan ZX. "The Reflection and application of the characteristics of external publicity translation in the English translation of Yunnan Pu 'er Tea." *Journal of Yunnan Agricultural University (Social Sciences edition)* 5.05(2011):113-117.
- [6] Chaijiani J. A Study on The Translation of English Slang under the Guidance of Functional Equivalence Theory. MA Thesis, Liaoning University.