

# The Study of Translation Techniques of Business English Based on Functional Equivalence Theory — Taking the White Paper “China’s Position on the China-US Economic and Trade Consultations” for Example

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**Abstract:** Under the background of global trade today, our country’s international economic and trade status, as well as political status, has been continuously improved. The important role of Business English translation couldn’t be ignored in terms of the development of China’s economy and trade.

This thesis firstly expounds Nida’s translation theory, then analyzes the features of Business English and its translation, and finally sums up the techniques for the translation of business white paper with examples. Taking the White Paper, “China’s Position on the China-US Economic and Trade Consultations”, published by the State Council Information Office in 2018 for reference, this paper summarizes seven common techniques of Business English translation including division translation, amplification translation, omission translation, converse translation, sequential translation, affirmative and negative translation, and reconstruction translation based on semantic, stylistic, cultural and business efficiency levels, which achieves an organic combination of translation theory and practice. And this could be beneficial for the future Business English translation study for reference.

**Keywords:** Functional equivalence; Business English; Translation techniques; White paper

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## 1. Business English Translation under Nida’s Functional Equivalence Theory

The White Paper “China’s Position on the China-US Economic and Trade Consultations” was released by the State Council Information Office on September 24, 2018 aiming to publicize the facts about China-US economic and trade relations. For another, it proclaimed China’s political position and our wish of addressing the problem with a rational solution.

When involved in Business English translation, the translator must choose the language with business characteristics to convey the business efficiency information of the original text. So, translators should conform to the principle of the functional equivalence which calls for not being constrained by the form of the source text. In order to achieve that, translators should consider the next four levels of equivalence. By adopting these models, they are able to achieve the maximum equivalence of semantic, stylistic, culture and business efficiency which makes the translation more successful.

## 2. Translation Techniques

### 2.1 Division Translation

China is fully committed to intellectual property protection. It has established a legal system for the protection of intellectual property that is consistent with prevailing international rules and adapted to China’s domestic conditions. China values the leading role of judicial measures in protecting intellectual property, and has achieved impressive results.

→In the source text, there is a semicolon separating the long sentence. In Chinese, semicolon is a punctuation between a comma and a full stop, it is mainly used to separate two sentences with certain relations such as coordinate, turning, progressive and cause. In this sentence, the two sides of the semicolon are progressive with the same subject “China”, the latter sum-

marizes the point of the former. And making the achievement a single sentence emphasizes the availability of the measure showing a sound attitude of our country.

## 2.2 Amplification Translation

The China-US commercial relationship serves as both the ballast and the propeller of the overall bilateral relationship. At stake are the fundamental interests of the two peoples, and the prosperity and stability of the world.

→In this sentence, “serve” is used to depict the role of pushing of the commercial relationship plays in the relationship between the two countries but not its general meaning. Here it reflects the formal and professional features of the Business English and at the same time, expresses the importance of the relationship of the two countries vividly. Besides, the word “overall” is added to modify “bilateral relationship” so that the relationship could have a clearer statement and the meaning of the sentence could be more accurate.

## 2.3 Omission Translation

But the more the US government is offered, the more it wants. Resorting to intimidation and coercion, it persisted with exorbitant demands, maintained the additional tariffs imposed since the friction began, and insisted on including mandatory requirements concerning China’s sovereign affairs in the deal, which only served to delay the resolution of remaining differences.

→In Chinese, we usually use category words behind concrete words, which is a language convention. While in English, concrete words could express meaning completely alone. So, when translators do translation, the category words like “way”, “method”, “attitude”, “means” and “problem” are often omitted. In this sentence, the words are left out as two single words “intimidation” and “coercion”.

## 2.4 Conversion Translation

The US has initiated frequent investigations under the long-unused Sections 201 and 232 against its main trading partners, causing disruption to the global economic and trade landscape.

→“Disruption” translated as a noun is a conversion from a verb to a noun. And this conforms to the expression of English in which noun has a predominate role.

Regarding the remaining issues, the Chinese government urged mutual understanding and compromise for solutions to be found.

→The translation “mutual understanding”, a noun phrase, which illustrates the predominant position of noun in English. And by using conversion translation, the active voice is converted into “solution to be found”, a passive voice phrase with the attribute put back.

## 2.5 Sequential Translation

Concerning their differences and frictions on the economic and trade front, China is willing to work together with the US to find solutions, and to reach a mutually beneficial and win-win agreement.

→This sentence uses sequential translation to express the meaning of the origin accurately and logically according to the sequence of the Chinese.

## 2.6 Affirmative and Negative Translation

Economic globalization is a firmly-established trend of the times. Beggar-thy-neighbor unilateralism and protectionism are unpopular.

→This sentence utilizes affirmative and negative translation-stating the negative things by affirmative sentences. “Buke-zudang” has a negation word “Bu” in Chinese, while its translation describes it from the reverse side without negation word in English- “firmly-established”.

China’s development may not be all smooth sailing. Difficulties or even perils are inevitable.

→A Chinese proverb, here, is translated as “not be all smooth sailing”. This sentence is expressed in a negative pattern that has explained the meaning of this phrase. Besides, it also transfers the positive word “Biran” as the “inevitable” with a sense of double negation which also uses the technique of affirmative and negative translation.

## 2.7 Reconstruction Translation

According to MOFCOM, the paid-in investment by the US in China was US\$85.19 billion by the end of 2018.

→In this sentence, the sequential of the whole sentence is adjusted, the adverbial modifier is put ahead. And “the paid-in investment”, adverbial modifier in Chinese, becomes the subject in English. In the end of the translation, it’s the time that is originally located in the middle of the sentence in Chinese. By reconstructing the whole sentence, we get a native English sen-

tence.

### 3. Conclusion

Based on Nida's functional equivalence theory, this paper analyzes the bilingual text of the White Paper named "China's Position on the China-US Economic and Trade Consultations". Functional equivalence emphasizes the natural equivalence of the two languages, which does not require the rigid word correspondence, but the equivalence of the translated text and the original text in deep meaning and function. Therefore, it is particularly important to understand the characteristics and purposes of the original text. This essay divides equivalence into four levels, and concludes seven translation techniques for business white paper translation. The author holds that the most important factors affecting translation are the common environment of the text and the reader, that is, the intention of the text, the situation of application and the identity of the reader. Therefore, in order to better meet the requirements of functional equivalence, to understand the language features, functions, and environment of the translation object is particularly important.

Due to the inadequacy of the author's translation competence and theoretical research, the study of White Paper translation is limited, so some key points and difficulties are yet to be discovered and dealt with.

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