

Chinese Translation from the perspective of Chinese culture

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Abstract: The current situation of TCM translation cannot fully meet the external communication needs of TCM. The difficulty lies in that translators have little understanding of the meaning of Chinese characters in the context of TCM. As a result, the translation results make foreign students and researchers confused, and the effect of TCM communication is greatly reduced. This paper focuses on the importance of the meaning of Chinese characters in translation, and puts forward the solution to the problem of Chinese character interpretation in TCM translation. The academic point of view that Chinese translation is based on Chinese characters is put forward.

Key words: TCM translation; Chinese characters; Traditional Chinese medicine propagation; Chinese character culture

I. Preface

Xu Wenbing, a famous TCM educator, wrote in the preface of *Tibetan Medicine in the Word*: I found that I didn't know Chinese characters until I translated TCM into English.

Both theoretically and in practice, Chinese translation circles put the emphasis on text analysis and translation skills, while the significance of the original text has always been despised and avoided. Taking the *Neijing* as an example, the translation circle mainly focuses on the translation strategies and rhetoric skills of words and sentences. The gap between ancient Chinese and modern foreign languages, from morphology and syntax to structure and cultural foundations, is difficult to bridge. The mission of TCM translation is to narrow and bridge these gaps, allowing TCM to transcend time and space. Even among doctors, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the text of the *Neijing*. Why translation? This article examines the translation of TCM law based on the interpretation of Chinese characters. Literacy is the first step in TCM translation.

2. Current situation of TCM translation in China

At present, the domestic TCM translation field is dominated by foreign language teachers from TCM colleges and universities, most of whom have a single foreign language background, and there is a serious shortage of combined talents of foreign language and Chinese medicine. At present, most of the core researchers in the Chinese TCM translation field are foreign language talents, compound talents of foreign language and Chinese medicine, and Li Zhaoguo is the only one. As a result, TCM translation studies mainly start from the perspective of "literature", ignoring the perspective of "medicine". The research mainly focuses on the standardization of terms, translation of loaded words, translation principles and methods, translation of disease nouns, translation of special language features of TCM and translation of metaphors, etc.. In the field of French translation, there is not a single compound translator with knowledge of Chinese medicine and foreign languages.

The professional background of TCM translation researchers determines the research focus, and an obvious tendency is to pay more attention to technique than text. To do translation well, the first step is to deeply understand the semantics of the original text. According to Tan Zaixi, "the so-called semantics is the meaning of the language". To grasp meaning, "you have to play with the context. "But specifically in the field of TCM translation," playing with context "must be measured not only from the perspective of literature, but also from the perspective of medicine. At present, there are three main trends in the research field of TCM translation: valuing skills over text, valuing theory over practice, valuing literature over medicine. TCM translation is confronted with medical texts rather than literary texts, so the translation should first consider the transmission of medical information and reflect the medical value of texts.

3. Chinese Character culture and TCM Translation

Chinese characters are the only highly developed ideographic writing system still in use, which interprets the profound Chinese culture with its unique sound, form and meaning combination system. The narrative language of traditional Chinese medicine embodies the profound and implicit characteristics of the essentials of Chinese characters. It has literary characteristics, and contains rich and profound medical principles. Therefore, to understand TCM, we must understand the basic meanings of TCM classics and terms. Literacy is the first step in learning TCM and the prerequisite for TCM translation. Professor Liu Lihong put forward three requirements for the study of TCM classics: to read the classics, one must clarify the three meanings, namely the meaning of the word, the meaning of the sentence, and the general meaning. Yang Jiang also believes that "translation consists of three things: (1) word selection; (2) making sentences "; And (3) make a chapter. Among them, the character chosen is the first. The meaning of the word is the basis, a thorough understanding of the meaning of the word, accurate selection of the word in translation. Combine the following example sentences to illustrate.

3.1 "Wood" of the Five Elements

At present, the "wood" of the five elements is translated as bois in French translation at home and abroad. In fact, it will be found that the "wood" of the five elements is not bois in French. We discuss from the ancient meaning of «mu», «mu» in oracle bone inscriptions and gold characters are similar: the top is the branch, the bottom is the root, the middle trunk. This is the image of a tree. In the definition of «wood» entry in the *Ancient Chinese Dictionary*, the first word is «tree». The French bois is interpreted as *matiere dure des grands vegetaux*

in the Dictionary of French and Chinese Double Solutions to Larus. Which means «wood», «wood».

Therefore, the French word for wood in the five elements should be *arbre*, which is interpreted as *vegetal vivace, ligneux et rameux*. That is the modern Chinese word for «tree». Only translated as «*arbre*» can the purpose of translation be achieved, and foreigners can more thoroughly understand our following interpretation: wood belongs to the Orient, meaning Shengfa, Xitao Da.

3.2 The «God» of Chinese Medicine

In TCM translation, the most elusive word is «god». The word «god» means gods and fairies. «Said the text» : «God, leads to all things also.» The god here is equivalent to the creator in Western culture, French is *dieu*, later extended as «spirit», close to the meaning of spiritualite: *conception de la relation a Dieu, caractere immateriel*. The later extension of human consciousness is close to the French *esprit*, *ame*.

The term «god» in Chinese medicine does not have a complete corresponding vocabulary in French, such as «life for those who get God, death for those who lose their mind», and «looking at God» for observation, etc. At this time, transliteration method is generally adopted, combined with annotation. In short, the Chinese word «god» refers to god, spirit, consciousness, character, and all invisible things that can be perceived. It needs to be examined in detail when translated.

3.3 People's «young», «long» and «old»

The book on Ancient Innocence begins with the words: «In the past, in the Yellow Emperor, I was born a spirit, weak and able to speak, young and partial, long and sensitive, and able to ascend to heaven.» In this sentence, a few words such as «Sheng», «weak», «young», «long» and «Cheng» sum up a person's life. But when translated into French, you need to look into it carefully. Depending on the literal meaning, we might translate it as *etre ne, etre petit, etre un enfant, etre grand, etre adulte*. Native speakers are bound to wonder: C 'est a quel age? Without knowledge of ancient Chinese characters, there is no answer, and the translation is bound to be ambiguous.

The word “sheng” in this sentence is generally understood as “born in...”. According to this, the French translation can be translated as *etre ne...*. There is disagreement about the understanding of the word «weak». Some people interpret it as «weak», while some scholars understand it as «weak crown», that is, 20 years old. When translating, it is necessary to list the different interpretations as annotations. For «weak» (*tres petit* in French), for «weak crown» (a 20 ans), the translation is direct. The translation of «young» is more easily confused with «weak». «Shuo Wen» : «The young, less also. For different understanding, do not steal translation, it is better to inform.

The “Bi” of diseases

Arthralgia: Wind, cold and dampness are mixed together to form Bi also. To foreign language translators, the “bi” of arthralgia is really difficult to understand. The term “arthralgia” is not difficult to translate. Generally, it can be solved by *maladie Bi* transliteration plus free translation. The interpretation of Bi in Shuo Wen is that Bi means dampness disease. The Ancient Chinese Dictionary explains that it is “a kind of disease with limb pain or numbness as the symptom, mostly caused by wind cold, wet and so on.” In addition, “Bi” also means blocking. Look again at the original text of Neijing “... The winner of its atmosphere is Bi, the winner of cold is Bi, the winner of dampness is Bi.” Among them, “walking Bi” refers to the wandering pain (*la douleur erratique*) and “standing bi” refers to the fixed pain (*la douleur fixe*). What is the meaning of “pain Bi”? Tong refers to pain, bi still refers to pain, the two words are used together, refers to severe pain (*la douleur aigue*).

4. The way to solve

Translation is to translate meaning, but to the word, to the word. Do not understand Chinese characters, look at the meaning of the word, word business, is harmful to the translation of traditional Chinese medicine, not conducive to the spread of traditional Chinese medicine. TCM text is not literary text. TCM translation belongs to highly professional scientific and technological translation. Without professional knowledge reserve and cognitive ability, translation is just a castle in the air. In order to avoid mistranslation and mistranslation in the practice of TCM translation, it is necessary to improve the ability of TCM translation from the following aspects.

4.1 Learn TCM and read the classics

Learning Chinese medicine is a prerequisite for a career in TCM translation. Translating meaning in TCM scenes based on our understanding of modern Chinese characters is likely to be a huge mistake. The above example is a drop in the bucket, and such misunderstandings are common in TCM. For example, how to distinguish the two diseases of “thin jue” and “decoction Jue” in TCM? Although “jue” can be understood as sudden unconsciousness, the difference between the two diseases needs to be carefully examined.

Learning Chinese medicine is inseparable from reading the classics. Neijing and Typhoid Fever are required reading. In the classics, stripe interpretation, word discrimination, narrative style, medical language, all need to master. Otherwise, what is translated does not look like traditional Chinese medicine, nor does it have the shadow of modern medicine, and even literary phrasing is problematic.

4.2 Reference books, often read

For TCM translators of foreign origin, illiteracy is as great an obstacle as medical illiteracy when reading classics like the Neijing, so reference books should be a necessity on the desks of TCM translators. Shuo Wen Jie Zi, compiled by Xu Shen in the Eastern Han Dynasty, is classified by radicals and contains 9,353 Chinese characters. It is the best choice for us to learn and understand the original meaning of Chinese characters. The Ancient Chinese Dictionary, which contains more than 14,000 single words, clear definitions and sources of literature, is an essential reference book for TCM translation.

4.3 In a threesome, there is my teacher

Most of the researchers of TCM translation are foreign language teachers in TCM colleges and universities, so they have the convenient

conditions to learn TCM. They can audit professional courses, or humbly consult TCM professors to help them grasp its gist and understand its significance. “Plain question. Yin and Yang impression big theory” : “Yang disease treatment Yin, Yin disease treatment Yang”, unclear medical theory often according to the knowledge of modern Chinese “treatment” translated as “cure (traiter)”, but after learning, it is not difficult to find that the “treatment” in this article when “tonic” solution. In order to make full use of the advantages of the environment in traditional Chinese medicine colleges and universities, the translators of traditional Chinese medicine must seek advice with such an open mind and strive to improve their translation accuracy.

5. Conclusion

TCM translation, first of all, is the problem of Chinese, and then the problem of foreign languages. Every Chinese character has a story of Chinese traditional culture. Chinese translation abroad must pay attention to the meaning of Chinese characters. A half-understanding of the meaning of Chinese characters, especially the meaning of Chinese characters in the context of traditional Chinese medicine, will easily lead to the repeated occurrence of “taking for granted” phenomenon in translation. Chinese medicine translation needs to be based on sufficient knowledge of Chinese characters and accurate cognition of Chinese medicine.

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