

STUDY ON TRANSLATION OF STEAMED DISH BASED ON NORD'S DOCUMENTARY AND INSTRUMENTAL TRANSLATION THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Shaanxi characteristic snacks play an important role in Chinese cuisine. How to translate Shaanxi characteristic snacks well is of great significance to the development of Shaanxi tourism and the propagation of Chinese traditional food culture. The translator selects the steamed dish in Shaanxi characteristic cuisine as the translation research object, combined with Christian Nord's documentary and instrumental translation theory, discusses, and studies the English translation of the steamed dish products and product introduction of Shaanxi Shenchu Food Co., Ltd., and puts forward some relevant suggestions.

Keywords: documentary translation; instrumental translation; steamed dish; translation

1. Introduction

Steamed dish is a traditional food that exist in most traditional regions of China. Generally, the way of making steamed dish is process various dishes into semi-finished products or finished products and then steam them while eating. The steamed dish has many different ingredients, and the local characteristics will be integrated in different ingredients. One of the representatives is Shaanxi steamed dish. Nowadays, the existing English translation of traditional food in Shaanxi Province such as steamed dish fails to reflect the traditional cultural characteristics and local conditions and customs of Shaanxi Province. With the continuous development of tourism in Shaanxi Province, more and more foreign tourists choose Shaanxi as one of their travel destinations, and food is a pillar of tourism industry. How to deliver a good food translation, especially the translation of traditional food in Shaanxi Province, has become a major topic for translators. A good translation allows tourists to not only taste delicious food, but also feel the customs behind the food. As a master of translation student from Shaanxi province, the author tries to use Christian Nord's documentary and instrumental translation theory to discuss the English translation of steamed dish and its product introduction of Shaanxi Shenchu Food Co.,

Ltd., trying to provide some constructive suggestions for its English translation.

2. Documentary and Instrumental Translation

Christiane Nord is a representative of functional approaches to translation. Based on House's covert and overt translations theory and Reiss's translation types based on text concepts theory, she introduced the documentary and instrumental translation theory in her book *Translation as a purposeful activity, Functionalist Approaches*. The theory presented a more elaborate translation typology based on strictly functionalist terms to make a distinction between the function of the translation process and the function of the target text as the result of this process. (Nord, 2001)

Documentary and instrumental translation are two basic types of translation processes. Documentary translation aims at producing in the target language a kind of document (certain aspects of) a communicative interaction in which a source-culture sender communicates with a source-culture audience via the source text under source-culture conditions. (Nord, 2001) If the (intended) function of the translation process is a "documentation of a source-culture communicative interaction for a target-culture readership", the overall function of the target text is metatextual, it is a text about another text or about one or more particular aspects of it. (Nord, 2007) Documentary translation presents a different and strange communication act in which a source-culture sender communicates with a source-culture audience via the source text under source-culture conditions. Sometimes, the translator may have to explain certain aspects of it in notes or other paratexts in order to make the target readers understand what is going on. In documentary translation, the target readers are not directly involved in the communicative interaction with the source-text sender.

Instrumental translation aims at producing in the target language an instrument for a new communicative interaction between the source-culture sender and a target-culture audience, using (certain aspects of) the source text as a model. (Nord, 2001) The function of the instrumental translation process is to produce a communicative "instrument" that is needed for an interaction in the target culture. The client could have asked someone to make up this text from scratch, but to save time and effort, they decided to use a text written in another language that is or was used for a similar purpose in another culture and have it translated. (Nord, 2001) In instrumental translation, the target audience will probably not even be aware of reading a translation because the text is supposed to look and functionally same as any ordinary text produced in the target culture for the target-culture audience.

The Form of Documentary Translation

There are various forms of documentary translation, all focusing on different aspects of the source text. According to the different purpose and focus of translation, Nord introduced 4

specific translation forms in documentary translation, which are word-for-word or interlinear translation, literal or grammar translation, philological or learned translation and foreignizing or exoticizing translation.

Word-for-word (interlinear) translation aims at the morphological, lexical, or syntactic features of the source-text. During the translation process of comparative linguistics or language encyclopedias, this form of translation is frequently used in order to focus on showing the structural features of source-text by means of target-text.

A literal (grammar) translation aims at reproducing the lexical units of the source-language by adapting syntactic structures and idiomatic use of vocabulary to the norms of target-language. This form of translation is often used with word-for-word translation for the translation of the speech of politicians or literal quotations in scholarly literature.

A philological (learned) translation is a form of translation that adds the necessary explanations about the source-culture or some peculiarities of the source-text in footnotes. This form is used frequently in the translation of ancient texts such as Homer or Bible.

A foreignizing (exoticizing) translation is a form of translation that maintain the source-culture of source-text. It might create the impression of exotic strangeness and cultural distance from target-text reader. This form of translation is often used in literary translation.

The Form of Instrumental Translation

According to the different function between source-text and target-text, Nord also divided instrumental translation into 3 forms, which is equifunctional translation, heterofunctional translation, and homologous translation.

A Equifunctional translation has the same function as the source-text and can accurately and effectively deliver the message of source-text. It is always found in technical texts, instruction manuals, information on products and other pragmatic texts. The target-text readers ideally do not notice the fact that they are reading a translation. This form of translation corresponds to what Reiss called "communicative translation". During the process of translation, due to the "incommensurability" between different languages and cultures and the expectations of source-text readers and target-text readers, the functions of the source-text may not be fully delivered to the target-text. Sometimes, due to special needs, the functions of the source-text and the target-text will be different. A heterofunctional translation is often used in this situation to achieve another function of source-text in target-text.

If the (literary) status of the target-text within the target-cluture text corpus corresponds to the

(literary) status the source-text has in the source-culture text corpus, a homologous translation is often used.

To sum up, it can be said that "documentary translation" emphasizes the source- language culture, and "instrumental translation" emphasizes the target-language culture. On this premise, Nord further pointed out that in documentary translation, although the communicative language has been changed to the target language, the communicative situation is still the source-language culture, and the language and cultural characteristics of the source language can still be retained. Nord gave a further explanation of documentary and instrumental translation in 2006: Documentary translations (such as word-for-word translation, literal translation, Philological translation and exoticizing translation) serve as a document of an SC communication between the author and the ST receiver, whereas the instrumental translation is a communicative instrument in its own right, conveying a message directly from the ST author to the TT receiver. An instrumental translation can have the same or a similar or analogous function as the ST. (Nord, 2006: 80)

3. Case Analysis from the Perspective of Documentary Translation

3.1 Literal Translation

Example 1

ST: “吉玲园”、“汇泉楼”、“聚丰德”

TT: "Ji Ling Garden", "Hui Quan Tower" and "Ju Feng De"

For restaurants with Chinese characterized name such as “Ji Ling Yuan”, in order to retain the informative function, the translator adopts the literal translation of documentary translation and uses the transliteration method to translate them.

Example 2

ST: 赣菜

TT: Jiangxi cuisine

For the translation of “赣（Gan）菜”，“赣（Gan）” is the difficulty of translation. In order to adapt idiomatic use of the vocabulary of source-language to the norms of the target-language, retain the informative function of the source-text and reproduce the word of the source-language, the translator adopts the literal translation of documentary translation to translate it into "Jiangxi cuisine". “赣（Gan）” is the abbreviation of Jiangxi Province, so "赣（Gan）" is directly

transliterated into "Jiangxi" to retain the informative function of the source-text and make the target-text readers easy to understand.

Example 3

ST: 《随园食单》

TT: *Suiyuan Cookbook*

“*Suiyuan Cookbook*” is the work of Yuan Mei, a famous writer and poet in the Qing Dynasty. In the process of translation, the translator adopts the literal translation of documentary translation to retain the informative function of the source-text. “随园” is a garden purchased by Yuan Mei, so the translator translates it into “Suiyuan” by transliteration. The meaning of “食单” is a recipe, which can be directly translated into the existing words in the target-language “cookbook”.

Philological Translation

Example 4

ST: 早在清朝，袁枚在《随园食单》中关于粉蒸肉就有记载

TT: As early as in the Qing Dynasty, Yuan Mei, a famous writer and poet in the Qing Dynasty, recorded the steamed pork with rice flour in *Suiyuan Cookbook*. (An important book that was written by Yuan Mei and discussed Chinese cooking technology and Northern and southern dishes)

In this sentence, “袁枚” and “《随园食单》” are the contents with the characteristics of the source-language culture. In the translation, the translator adopts the philological translation of documentary translation to explain the characteristics of the source-language culture and considering that the dish introduction card is a complimentary commodity of the steamed dishes, its text space is limited. Therefore, the translation method of annotation in the text is adopted to translate “袁枚” and “《随园食单》”, and the apposition “a famous writer and poet in the Qing Dynasty” is added after “袁枚”, add “an important book that was written by Yuan Mei and discussed Chinese cooking technology and Northern and southern dishes” to the “《随园食单》”. The use of philological translation can keep the function of the source text intact and make the target-text readers fully understand the source-language culture.

Example 5

ST: 八宝饭

TT: eight-treasure steamed glutinous rice

In order to preserve the characteristics of the dishes as much as possible, the translator chose the philological translation of documentary translation. As a snack with Chinese characteristics, "eight treasures" represents eight different ingredients: "glutinous rice, bean paste, jujube paste, preserved fruit, lotus seed, coix seed, longan, white sugar, lard, and other raw materials.". However, if add notes within the text, the total number of words will exceed the maximum number of words that can be contained on the food package. Therefore, the translator directly translates “八宝” into “eighttreasure”, and then introduces eight ingredients of “eight treasures” in the dish introduction card attached to the product. This not only retains the cultural characteristics of the source-text, but also allows the target-text readers to have a full understanding of this characteristic dish.

Example 6

ST: 于是民间传开了苏姐己肉的名字，之后传来传去就叫成了小酥肉。

TT: The pork meat was very delicious, so the name of Su Daji meat was spread among the people, and it was gradually called crispy pork (the Chinese phonetic alphabet of “Su” also has a meaning of “crispy”) when it was spread.

In order to accurately convey the informative function in the source-text to the target-text readers, the translator adopts the philological translation of document translation to explain the homophonic phenomenon of “crispy” of “crispy pork” and “Su” of “Su Daji” in the source-text, so that target-text readers can understand the characteristics of the dish name.

Example 7

ST: 黄焖鸡

TT: braised chicken with yellow sauce

As a famous dish, the name of braised chicken with yellow sauce reflects the characteristics of Chinese traditional cooking technique. The cooking technique was called “braised with yellow sauce” mainly because the color of the soup is yellow. In order to make the target-text readers fully understand the traditional Chinese cooking skills, the translator chooses the philological translation of the documentary translation. The specific translation method is to first translate the “黄焖鸡” into “braised chicken with yellow sauce”, and then add an explanation of “braised with yellow sauce” in the dish introduction: " braised with yellow sauce is a cooking technique that the color of the soup is yellow.". Thus the target-text readers can fully understand the characteristics of the dishes.

Exoticizing Translation

Example 8

ST: 梅菜扣肉

TT: sliced pork belly with Meigan cai

“梅菜” is the difficulty in translating sliced pork belly with Meigan cai. “梅菜”, as a unique vegetable in the source-language country, has no corresponding vocabulary in the source-language culture. The translator chooses the exoticizing translation of documentary translation to translate it, and uses transliteration method to translate “梅菜” into "Meigan Cai". The dish is translated as "sliced pork belly with Meigan Cai". The reason why the translator did not choose philological translation is that there is not much text space for interpretation due to the limitation of food packaging layout. And when the target-text readers taste delicious food, they can see what “Meigan can” is, thus the exoticizing translation of documentary translation are adopted in this translation.

4. Case Analysis from the Perspective of Instrumental Translation

4.1 Equifunctional Translation

Example 9

ST:

用精肥参半之肉，炒米粉黄色，拌面酱蒸之，下用白菜作垫，熟时不但肉美，菜亦美。以不见水，故味独全。江西人菜也。

TT: Steamed pork with rice flour is a famous dish in Jiangxi Province.

When making steamed pork with rice flour, the raw material is the intermixture of fat and lean pork belly. First, fry the rice flour to golden color, then pour with the sauce, and spread cabbage under the pork belly. After steaming, not only the streaky pork is delicious, but also the cabbage tastes good. As there is no soup for steamed meat, the taste is all retained in the meat. This sentence is record of steamed pork with flour in Yuan Mei's book. The source-text introduces the cooking method of steamed meat to the source-text readers. Although it is ancient Chinese, it is very colloquial. And because the informative function of recipes is very prominent, it is difficult for the source-text and the target-text to be completely equal in morphology and syntax. In order to accurately and effectively transmit the informative function of the source-text, the translator uses the equifunctional translation of instrumental translation to present the information of the source-text in the language form familiar to the target-text readers. Therefore, the translator adopts

the method of interpretation to make some changes to the lexical and syntactic structure of the source text, accurately convey the information to the target-text readers and achieve the functional equivalence between the source-text and the target-text.

4.2 Heterofunctional Translation

Example 10

ST: “此鸡匠心独运，是上品之上，当为一绝”

TT: This chicken is ingenious and the best of best and should be known as a delicacy. This sentence is the evaluation of Han Fuyu, then vice president of Shandong Province, after tasting yellow braise chicken. The source-text is a very formal literary language, and its appellative function can make the source-text readers feel the delicious taste of yellow braise chicken. However, if it is directly translated into the target-language, its appellative function may not play its original communicative function. The translator believes that the information content is primary, and the language form is secondary. Therefore, in order to realize the informative function of the source-text, the translator chooses the heterofunctional translation of instrumental translation and makes appropriate changes to the form and words of the source-text by means of interpretation. Although the syntactical structure of source-text and target-text are different, the informative function can be retained.

Example 11

ST: 有增强消化，清热解暑，消滞健胃，降脂降压的功效。

TT: It also aids digestion, lowers blood lipids and pressure, and keeps body healthy.”

In this sentence, the most difficult part to translate is “清热解暑”. As a concept of traditional Chinese medicine, there is no corresponding vocabulary in the target-language. This phenomenon between source-language and target-language is called the “incommensurability”. (Jia Wenbo, 2012) In addition, the source-language is good at expressing feelings. In pragmatic texts such as product introduction, there will also be comment remarks with appellative function such as four-character idiomatic phrase. The target-language pays attention to logic and focuses on objective expression and accurate transmission of information in pragmatic texts. Therefore, the translator chooses the heterofunctional translation of instrumental translation to transform the appellative function of the source-text into informative function, which is conducive to the understanding and acceptance of the target-text readers.

5. Conclusion

By combining Christian Nord's documentary and instrumental translation theory, the translator translated the steamed dish product and its product introduction of Shaanxi Shenchu Food Co., Ltd. into English, and found that the translation of steamed dish and its product introduction should first determine the main functions of a text or determine the functions of different parts of the text due to the different functions, so as to adopt the corresponding translation strategies and methods to translation. In addition, according to different text types, not all Nord's translation theories can be reflected in any text. For example, the text studied in this paper tends to be pragmatic text, and the homologous translation of instrumental translation will not be used in this text.

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