

A Study on the C-E Translation Problems and Strategies in the International Publicity Materials of Quanzhou Footwear Machinery Enterprises

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Keywords: Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises; international publicity materials translation; translation techniques; Catford's Translation Shift Theory

Abstract: High-quality translation of international publicity materials serves as the core carrier of enterprises' international communication and a window for the external presentation of their brand images. It can effectively show the value of enterprise products and services, and help enterprises improve their competitiveness in the global market. Under the guidance of Catford's Translation Shift Theory, this study takes the international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises as the research object. It uses the case study method as the main research tool. This study analyzes common translation problems of such texts from three aspects: lexical, syntactic and discourse levels. These main problems include improper lexical selection, disordered sentence structure, textual incoherence and incohesion. On this basis, this study discusses and summarizes suitable translation methods from category shifts. The study indicates that, at the lexical level, the use of diction and literal translation can significantly enhance the accuracy of semantic expression for professional terms; at the syntactic level, voice change and combination can achieve pragmatic adaptation to target language norms; at the discourse level, linear translation and addition can improve the logical coherence and readability of the text. By analyzing the challenges in translating such publicity texts, this study summarizes practical translation experience and methods. It aims to provide references for the translation work of other similar local enterprises, further enrich the research on international publicity translation, and support the international promotion of regional industries.

1. Introduction

Economic globalization is deepening rapidly. Against this backdrop, the C-E translation of corporate international publicity materials plays a vital role in overseas brand communication. It affects whether the value of products can be realized and whether international competitiveness can be enhanced. In Quanzhou footwear machine enterprises, there are many common problems in the

English translation of their international publicity materials. These problems include improper lexical selection, disordered sentence structure, textual incoherence and incohesion. Such problems will cause reading difficulties for foreign readers. At the same time, they also make this study have practical value and theoretical significance.

Corporate international publicity materials mainly highlight the basic information and business strategy of an organization to the public through text and pictures. They have three main features including informativeness, persuasiveness and cross-cultural communication. Chinese corporate international publicity materials often pay attention to emotional resonance and create atmosphere. Chinese texts of this kind often use allusions and four-character phrases, and they are mostly written from the third-person view. By comparison, English corporate international publicity materials use simple and direct language. They focus on the enterprise's main business plans and product advantages, and usually adopt the first-person perspective. From the perspective of linguistic comparison, Catford's Translation Shift Theory has two main parts, which are level shifts and category shifts. This theory also stresses that form and meaning should keep equal and unified in translation. It can well match the stylistic features of corporate publicity materials, such as accuracy, standardization and logical coherence, effectively address translation obstacles caused by linguistic differences between Chinese and English, and provide a scientific and systematic theoretical support and analytical perspective for the C-E translation of international publicity materials in the footwear machinery industry.

2. Theoretical basis

This chapter will give an explanatory introduction to Catford's Translation Shift Theory and an overview of domestic and international research on corporate international publicity materials, so as to provide theoretic basis for the study of this thesis.

2.1. An overview of Catford's Translation Shift Theory

In the 1950s, different linguistic theories began to connect with each other. This change helped translation studies break away from old experience-based research methods. It also pushed translation research to develop in a more systematic and theoretical way. As a result, the linguistic school of translation came into being. Scholars such as Roman Jakobson, Eugene A. Nida and John C. Catford were the key members of this academic school^[18].

Early scholars studied the changes that happen in translation. Vinay and Darbelnet analyzed French and English texts in real cases, and summed up seven common ways of translation. Munday^[7] pointed out in his research that the idea of transposition mainly means changing word classes during translation. Besides, Roman Jakobson^[5] further studied translation changes. His research ideas also provided important reference for Catford to build his Translation Shift Theory later. In Catford's monograph *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, Catford^[3] defined translation as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" and illustrated the specific categories of translation shifts along with relevant examples. Chairina, Jufrizal and Yusdi^[4] treated shifts as "changes in form and meaning" and their study of passive constructions in the *Harry Potter* translation focused on formal shifts. They argued that such adjustments can help a translation conform to target-language norms while keeping the original sense intact. Mufli and Ali^[6] took a qualitative approach to *The Emperor's New Clothes*. They distinguished four categories of shifts and suggested that changes in form can make a text easier for readers to follow.

Since Catford's Translation Shift Theory was introduced to China, it has effectively adapted to the grammatical and expressive disparities between English and Chinese. Mu Lei^[13] laid a solid

foundation for popularizing this theory in China and advocated for expanding the boundaries of translation research. Zheng Shuming and Cao Hui^[19] proposed applying level shifts and category shifts to resolve syntactic differences between English and Chinese, which provides a practical approach to improving the quality of EST translation. In addition, Li Jingyi and Sun Chunling^[11] maintained that the theory's micro-linguistic analytical approach can enhance translation precision, and that level shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and structure shifts are effective in addressing linguistic differences between English and Chinese. Simultaneously, Yin Tianjiao and Sun Xiaohui^[17] took the Chinese version of *Wuthering Heights* as an example, they confirmed that level shifts and category shifts contribute to preserving the emotional subtleties and cultural connotations of the source text.

2.2. Researches on the translation of corporate international publicity materials

The translation of corporate international publicity materials plays an important part in cross-cultural communication. Since such materials have their own unique linguistic features, understanding these features is crucial to completing high-quality translation work. Many scholars have recognized the importance of this type of translation and explored both its theoretical foundations and practical applications. For instance, Huang Youyi^[10] pointed out that this kind of translation work changes business information into texts that foreign readers can understand, helps companies communicate with international partners, and removes barriers caused by different languages and cultures.

Most studies done by foreign scholars mainly focus on building research theories and improving practical translation methods. Aji, Gunawan and Simatupang^[1] did research on the instruction texts of beauty products. They stated that two important points should be guaranteed in this kind of text. The first is to use professional technical words correctly, and the second is to adopt an easy and friendly writing style for ordinary customers. Zeng^[8] further applied the Adaptation Theory in translation research. He stressed that translators need to make flexible changes to fit the cultural background of target readers. Besides, translators should change language expressions according to local cultural ideas and people's shopping habits. Astuti, Nababan and Santosa^[2] chose company introduction texts in Indonesian and English as their research objects. They adopted qualitative research methods and followed the research model put forward by Miles and Huberman. The three researchers summed up three common translation skills, namely loan translation, word order adjustment and direct translation.

With the deepening of Chinese researchers' research on the translation of corporate international publicity materials, Lu Mengna^[12] has pointed out two major issues in translating Chinese corporate profiles into English including cultural disconnection and rigid wording. Against the backdrop of the "Going Global" initiative, Yan Junjie^[16] studied Shishi's export enterprises from Eco-translatology, found issues like improper non-subject sentences and mechanical word-for-word rendering, put forward adaptive strategies and suggested a sound translation ecology to improve international promotion. As a key contribution to the innovation of translation for cross-border e-commerce corporate publicity texts, Song Xiaozong and Liu Ning^[15] constructed a systematic and targeted framework based on the inherent Sino-English linguistic and cultural differences. They stressed key information transmission, concise English and translator competence, effectively boosting cross-cultural communication.

3. The existing problems in the translation of international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises

The quality of the translation of corporate international publicity materials directly affects the

construction of their global brand image. However, the current translations still exist many common problems in professional appropriateness and linguistic standardization. Base on this background, this chapter will employ some wrong examples to conduct a targeted analysis of such existing problems, such as improper lexical selection, disordered sentence structure, textual incoherence and incohesion.

3.1. Improper lexical selection

In the C-E translation of international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises, technical words are characterized by a one-to-one correspondence between terms and meanings, clear conceptual definitions, a degree of objectivity, and relatively narrow application scopes^[9]. However, obvious inaccuracies exist in the English translations of some commonly used terms, whose core problems are mainly reflected in the mismatch between lexical choice and professional context, rigid expression, and the omission of critical information.

Example 1:

[Original translation]: EVA Two Color One time Foaming Molding Machine (Vacuum)

In the example 1, the original translation serves as an adjective to define the equipment type and thus functions as a technical attributive. The original translation is literally adopted as “Two Color”, which only captures the surface idea. In the original translation, “One time” indicates frequency of operation, but it lacks the precision expected in descriptions of industrial processes or mechanical equipment. In addition, “Vacuum” only indicates a physical state rather than reflecting the structural nature.

3.2. Disordered sentence structure

When Chinese enterprises translate their international publicity materials into English for international use, correct sentence structure is very important. A lot of translated English texts have obvious problems. Most of these problems come from stiff sentence patterns that do not follow common English writing habits. These translations only copy the original Chinese word by word in a simple way. They cannot keep the complete and smooth meaning of the original text.

Example 2:

[Original translation]: Automatic mold holder for better mixing of raw materials.

In the example 2, the original translation is only a noun phrase. Without a subject or predicate, it cannot form a complete English sentence. This common problem results from incomplete sentence structure. The source text shows a clear cause-and-effect relationship. It means this device structure helps improve the working effect. However, the original translation only uses a simple prepositional phrase “for better mixing” to connect the two parts. This way of showing logic is too simple and stiff.

3.3. Textual incoherence and incohesion

As discussed in the discourse analysis, there exist obvious incohesion and incoherence in the translation of corporate international publicity materials. This usually happens when translators rely too much on word-for-word matching or fail to reorganize information properly. The result shows up in weak inter-sentential connections, scattered information organization, and a lack of rational semantic progression.

Example 3:

[Original translation]: Plastic Blender is used for plastic material mixing and formula mixing, which is mostly used in the mixing of EVA, PE, PP, PVC, PU, TPR, ABS, PBS new materials or

leftovers/recycling of reusing. Our company has high-speed and low-speed blenders according to its production mode also horizontal or vertical, automatic or manual discharging devices according to its structure. Customers can be flexible of choosing the blenders. They have merit such as no noise, high efficiency, even mixing, easy operation, high applicability, which make it an ideal machine for plastic blending.

In the example 3, no cohesive devices are used to link the four semantic components: equipment application, product classification, customer selection, and equipment advantages. The sentences are completely independent and isolated, displaying obvious fragmentation and a total lack of logical relations between clauses. The first two sentences are lengthy and complex, the third sentence abruptly becomes short, and the fourth returns to a long structure, resulting in an erratic syntactic rhythm.

4. Strategies for the translation of international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises under the guidance of Catford's Translation Shift Theory

On the basis of systematically sorting out the core principles of Catford's Translation Shifts Theory and summarizing the current situation and existing problems of the C-E translation of international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises, this chapter will systematically explore the specific application approaches of Translation Shifts Theory (such as structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and intra-system shifts) in practical translation.

4.1. Translation at lexical level

Corporate international publicity materials use professional and simple words. They contain a large number of industrial terms and basic professional nouns for product functions. The words used are easy to understand and fit business needs. Based on these features, the translator adopts more appropriate methods of diction and literal translation to solve such problems as vagueness and deviation from accepted industrial norms.

4.1.1. Diction

Diction refers to the selection of proper words and the use of formal or daily language styles. When writing international publicity materials for local enterprises, translators who pick their words carefully can make the texts easier to read and more effective. In this way, foreign readers can correctly understand the key information and cultural meanings behind Quanzhou.

Example 4:

[Original translation]: Strong Granulators

[Improved translation]: Heavy-duty Granulator

In the example 4, the translator may choose different expressions within the language rules of the target text instead of using direct equivalent words^[14]. "heavy-duty" is a fixed common word. It is often used to describe equipment that can work for a long time, bear large loads and run with high working strength. Based on Catford's intra-system shifts in Translation Shift Theory, this kind of shifts happens when the source text and target text have similar formal structures.

4.1.2. Literal translation

When applying literal translation, the main goal is to keep the original word structure and surface meaning as much as grammar will allow. The original expressive order is retained, which helps preserve both the factual content and the overall tone of the source text. In doing so, the translator shows respect for the author's logical flow and cultural specifics.

Example 5:

[Original translation]: Preform EVA Injection Molding Machine

[Improved translation]: One-color EVA Preform Injection Molding Machine

In the example 5, guided by Catford's intra-system shifts in Translation Shift Theory, the improved translation not only achieves accurate correspondence between the source text and the modifier unit in the target text, but also conforms to the "attributive modifier + core terminology" word-formation pattern commonly used in English footwear machinery terminology.

4.2. Translation at syntactic level

Chinese corporate international publicity materials contain many short sentences. Their word order is not very tight. Most sentences are simple declarative sentences with plain and basic sentence structures. Based on these features, the translator flexibly adopts the methods of combination and amplification to analyze and process the relevant sentences in English translation.

4.2.1. Combination

Combination can gather scattered information together and cut down repeated expressions. In this way, the international publicity materials of local companies will have a more coherent structure for foreign readers. This method makes logical relations closer and combines small details properly.

Example 6:

[Original translation]: Saving power which reduce production cost.

[Improved translation]: This machine features outstanding energy efficiency and significant cost reduction.

In the example 6, Based on Catford's structure shifts and class shifts in Translation Shift Theory, the translator uses combination in revising the original translation, which is specifically manifested as follows: at the structure shifts level, the translator integrates the two disjoint parts of the original translation into a concise "subject + predicate + coordinate objects" structure. At the level of word class shifts, Chinese action-oriented expressions are converted into English nominal phrases in revised translations, such as "energy efficiency" and "cost reduction".

4.2.2. Amplification

Chinese often presents information in loose, non-subject phrases and run-on sentences. In contrast, English emphasizes complete sentence structures and explicit logical connections. To address these linguistic differences, the translator adopts the method of amplification. This method expands the original textual content, enriches conveyed information and supplements implicit meanings.

Example 7:

[Original translation]: Precise digital measurement.

[Improved translation]: This machine is equipped with digital metering to ensure accurate measurement.

In the example 7, guided by Catford's unit shifts in Translation Shift Theory, the translator adopts the method of amplification for translation optimization. In the improved translation, the translator supplements implicit semantic information omitted in the original Chinese text, breaks the fragmented phrase structure, and reorganizes the original content into a well-structured complete sentence with subject, passive predicate and purpose adverbial.

4.3. Translation at discourse level

Chinese corporate international publicity materials often simply list product information in a plain way. Their sentences often lack proper connection between sentences, and some writings also have rigid logic for brand promotion. In consideration of its straightforward content arrangement, the translator employs the methods of linear translation and addition to make up for its weak logic and cohesion to analyze and refine the relevant discourse in the English translation.

4.3.1. Linear translation

Linear translation keeps the original sentence structure and direct word meaning without making extra changes. This method can well keep the logical order and smooth writing style of international publicity materials. In this way, readers from other countries can understand the main idea of the source text in a clear and simple way.

Example 8:

[Original translation]: The unique structure design with four pillars for cylinder at every station guarantees no rupture and distortion and strong stability. It uses servo motor to make the machine to work fast and make the stations go up and down faster, more economical and efficient and environmental. The machine is easy to be controlled and maintained. It can produce the single color and two colors shoe soles and slippers, etc. in one time.

[Improved translation]: The unique structure design with four pillars for cylinder at every station guarantees no rupture and distortion and strong stability. It uses servo motor to make the machine to work fast and make the stations go up and down faster, more economical and efficient and environmental. It is easy to operate and maintain, and additionally can produce single-color, double-color shoe soles, slippers, etc. in one step.

In the example 8, drawing on Catford's Translation Shift Theory, the improved translation adjusts the sentence structure to conform to English grammatical rules while adapting to the word order of linear translation. The improved translation merges them into a compound coordinate sentence. Viewed through Catford's structure shifts in Translation Shift Theory, this practice represents the merger and conversion of clause structures.

4.3.2. Addition

Addition, defined as supplying omitted elements and inserting brief clarifications, helps improve the readability and overall acceptability of cross-cultural publicity materials. This method enables international readers to grasp the essential message and cultural undertones of the source text with greater ease and accuracy.

Example 9:

[Original translation]: We take "Being practical, creative and excellent" as the purpose of our management. According to the concept of creating value-added service for customers and fulfilling our social duties, from now on, we will devote ourselves to market developments and technology innovation; follow up the full-quality managements; train integrated talents and enhance international cooperation. We are confident that we can be masterpieces of shoes machines.

[Improved translation]: The Company adheres to take "Being practical, creative and excellent" as the purpose of our management. Guided by the concept of creating value-added services for customers, we fulfill our social duties. Going forward, we will devote ourselves to market expansion and technological innovation, pursue full-quality management, train integrated talents and enhance international cooperation. Through these efforts, we are confident that we can become a model for the shoe machinery industry.

In the example 9, under the guidance of Catford's structure shifts in Translation Shift Theory, the translator restructures the source text, which was rendered as separate clauses linked by semicolons in the source text. Multiple independent predicates are integrated into coordinate predicate structures, which is a typical instance of structure shifts. This adjustment not only accords with the hypotactic features of English, but enhances textual cohesion.

5. Conclusions

This study analyzes the international publicity materials of Quanzhou footwear machinery enterprises guided by Catford's Translation Shift Theory. Such texts undertake information delivery and commercial promotion, featuring plentiful professional terms, imperative and non-subject sentences. The theory is verified applicable to this translation practice. Corresponding strategies at lexical, syntactic and discourse levels effectively enhance translation quality. Rational application of translation shifts ensures accurate information output, supports overseas publicity and brand building, and offers practical references for relevant English translation work.

Acknowledgements

Fund Project: Fujian Undergraduate Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program: A Study on the C-E Translation Problems and Strategies in the International Publicity Materials of Quanzhou Footwear Machinery Enterprises Against the Background of Quanzhou Brand Internationalization (Project No. 202512710011).

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