

Philosophical Issues in Cross-cultural Communication and Translation Strategies

Hanhui Li*

School of Foreign Languages, Fuzhou University of International Studies and Trade,
Fuzhou Fujian, 350202, China
FzfuHanhuiLi@163.com

Abstract: In the vast field of translation, challenges extend beyond language to encompass cultural differences. Cultural variations between source and target languages, understanding the target audience and their cultural backgrounds, as well as employing strategies such as equivalence substitution and cultural adaptation, constitute crucial aspects of the translation process. Through a comprehensive understanding and proficient application of these aspects, accurate, effective, and reader-oriented information transformation can be achieved from the source language to the target language. This paper primarily explores the understanding and handling of cultural differences between the source and target languages in the translation process, with a specific focus on considering the target audience and their cultural backgrounds, along with the significant strategies of equivalence substitution and cultural adaptation for resolving cultural disparities.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural; Communication; Philosophy of Language; Translation Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

The principles of philosophy of language provide a theoretical framework and tools for people to understand and deal with problems in intercultural communication. Effective intercultural communication requires not only language skills, but also an understanding of the social and cultural background of the language, sensitivity to the context, and understanding and compliance with the rules of language use. Therefore, in the practice of intercultural communication, the principles of philosophy of language provide valuable guidance and inspiration for people.

1.1 Definition and Importance of Intercultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication, also known as intercultural communication, refers to the communication activities carried out by people from different cultural backgrounds. In this process, information, ideas, emotions and values are passed between people through verbal and non-verbal means. Nowadays, with the increasing globalization, the importance of cross-cultural communication is becoming increasingly

prominent. People live in a world composed of many cultures, each of which has its own unique expression and values. Understanding and respecting these cultural differences can lead to more effective and equal communication, enabling people to better understand and be understood by others in many areas, including daily life, academic research, business transactions, and policy decisions. The importance of cross-cultural communication is also reflected in its role in establishing and maintaining harmonious social relations. Only by understanding and respecting other people's cultural concepts can misunderstandings and conflicts be avoided and mutual trust and understanding be established. At the same time, cross-cultural communication is also an important way to exchange knowledge and ideas. Through effective cross-cultural communication, we can learn and draw on the wisdom and experience of others to promote the progress of human society (Q. Liu, 2022). In addition, cross-cultural communication can better understand and accept the diversity of one's own culture, thus promoting the development and prosperity of culture. Under the trend of globalization, the importance of intercultural communication is also manifested in its role in promoting international cooperation and understanding. With the development of information technology and the convenience of transportation, people all over the world are communicating and interacting more and more frequently. Effective intercultural communication can not only promote understanding and friendship between people of different countries, but also promote cooperation in international trade, scientific and technological exchanges, policy consultation and other fields, thus promoting world peace and development. Cross-cultural communication is an extremely important skill and accomplishment for everyone (Cui, 2022).

2. THE PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

2.1 Semantic Differences and their Cultural Implications

Semantic differences involve different understandings and expressions of the same concepts or things in different languages and cultures. Each language reflects the specific perspective, image and values of the culture behind it. Such deep cultural influences lead to semantic differences, making the same words or phrases have completely different meanings and emotional colors in different languages and cultures (Li, 2022). For example, certain colors or animals may have different symbolic meanings

in different cultures. In Western cultures, black is often associated with sadness and death, while in Eastern cultures, white may carry such connotations. For another example, the Wolf may be regarded as a symbol of ferocity and danger in Western cultures, while it may be regarded as a symbol of wisdom and strength in some indigenous cultures, leading to misunderstanding and confusion in cross-cultural communication. In addition, semantic differences also exist in more complex social and cultural phenomena, which are influenced by etiquette, customs and other aspects, and their characteristics and cultural differences are shown in Table 1 below. Social and cultural phenomena are usually deeply rooted in the history, tradition and values of a culture, and their expression and understanding in language often involve a series of cultural references and associations. Each language and culture has its own unique perspective and expression, and no one language can completely replace the richness and diversity of another. Therefore, cross-cultural communication should not try to eliminate semantic differences, but should respect and appreciate these differences as opportunities to increase understanding and learning, and promote people's communication and sharing (Jiang & Zhu, 2022).

Table 1: Characteristics and Cultural Differences of Social and Cultural Phenomena

Social and Cultural Phenomenon	Peculiarity	Cultural Difference
Etiquette	Social norms and codes of conduct	In different cultures, the specific requirements and expressions of etiquette are different, involving differences in action, speech, clothing and so on
Mores habit	Folk tradition and practice	Different regions and cultural backgrounds have different customs, such as eating habits, celebrations, wedding ceremonies, etc., often related to region, religion, history and so on.

2.2 The Challenge of Context Understanding and its Influence on Intercultural Communication

In cross-cultural communication, context is not only the content of the language itself, but also includes the intention of the speaker, the background of the listener, environmental factors, cultural customs, social relations, historical background, and even more elements. Due to these complex factors, understanding and interpreting the context has become an extremely complex task. Understanding context requires the ability to

understand and interpret the personal background of the speaker, including culture, education, gender, age and occupation, etc. It also requires consideration of the listener's knowledge, experience, feelings, beliefs and values, and how the interlocutor's words may be understood and interpreted. The interlocutor should empathize with and understand the listener's perspective and experience. In addition, understanding the context also involves the understanding of cultural customs, social relations and historical background, which requires a wide range of knowledge and deep understanding in order to understand and interpret various complex cultural and social phenomena. In cross-cultural communication, the challenge of context understanding may lead to misunderstanding and confusion. If context can be successfully understood and interpreted, different cultures can be better understood and accepted, effective communication can be established and maintained, misunderstandings and conflicts can be avoided, and cross-cultural communication ability can be enhanced (Zhu & Mo, 2022). Therefore, while understanding context is a challenge, it is also an important skill with significant impact and value for both personal development and social harmony.

2.3 Pragmatic Issues in Culture and their Impact on Intercultural Communication

Pragmatics, as an important branch of linguistics, mainly studies how language conveys meaning in actual use. Under specific cultural background, pragmatics phenomena will be deeply affected and manifested in various ways. Pragmatics covers many aspects, including verbal behavior, implicit theory, politeness principle, dialogue maximization, and cooperation principle, etc., which may have different expressions and meanings in different cultures. For example, one culture may prefer to use direct verbal acts, while another culture may prefer to use indirect verbal acts. (Wang, 2022) Alternatively, one culture may prefer to adhere to conversational maximization, i.e. providing as much information as possible to facilitate communication, while another culture may prefer to adhere to the principle of politeness, i.e. avoiding offending others as much as possible. In addition, each culture has its own specific pragmatic rules and customs, which may be widely understood and accepted within the culture (X. Liu, 2022), but may not be known to the other party in cross-cultural communication. For example, one culture may have certain customs of verbal behavior, which should be used in which circumstances, while another culture may not be aware of these customs.

2.4 Differences in Language Customs and Interlocutors' Expectations

Each language is formed and developed in a specific cultural background. Therefore, its customs reflect the values, beliefs, and norms of behavior of the culture (Wu, 2022). These linguistic customs are expressed in various communicative occasions, such as the way of greeting, the vocabulary of expressing gratitude, or the way of expressing apology, which may be different in different cultures. The same words and expressions may have different meanings and feelings due to differences in cultural backgrounds. Interlocutors' expectations are shaped by their personal cultural background and experience, which will affect how interlocutors understand and interpret others' words, how they respond to others' words, and how they evaluate their own communication effects with others (Yu, 2022). In cross-cultural communication, interlocutors' expectations may be challenged and they need to face language customs and behavioral norms that are different from their own habits, which may lead to confusion, unease and even conflict. The differences of language customs and interlocutors' expectations interact in cross-cultural communication, forming a complex dynamic process. In this process, it is necessary to learn how to adjust one's speech and behavior to different cultural environments and communication requirements, learn how to accept and appreciate other cultures and values while respecting one's own cultural identity, and seek understanding and reconciliation rather than avoidance or resistance in the face of conflict and confusion.

3. DIFFERENT TRANSLATION THEORIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 The Influence of Errata Translation

Errata translation, also known as comparative translation, is a strategy for translating between two or more languages, focusing on differences and misunderstandings between the source and target languages, and how to achieve a more accurate translation through comparison and correction. The core of this translation method is to identify and resolve possible linguistic and cultural differences through in-depth understanding and comparison of the source language and the target language, so as to achieve accurate and accurate cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication (Declercq et al., 2019). The corrigible translation method emphasizes the equivalence of the source language and the target language. Although there may be significant differences between the two languages in terms of grammar, vocabulary, phonetics and customs, each language can effectively

convey its specific meaning and function. Therefore, the task of translation is to find the equivalence between the source language and the target language, rather than simply copying or adapting the expression of the source language. Language is not only a communicative tool, but also a carrier of culture. Therefore, understanding and dealing with cultural differences is an important part of errata translation, including an in-depth understanding of the source culture and the target culture, an awareness of the relationship between language and culture, and the handling of cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.

3.2 The Use of Equivalent Substitutions

As a translation strategy, equivalence substitution has been widely used in language translation and cross-cultural communication. Equivalence substitution is to find "equivalence" between the source language and the target language, that is, similar or equivalent elements, and then replace the elements in the source language with the equivalent in the target language. It may involve the substitution of words, phrases, sentences or even cultural customs and values in order to make the target language audience as understandable and acceptable as possible while maintaining the information in the source language (Zhu et al., 2022). In practical applications, there may not be exactly equal elements between the source language and the target language, so in the process of finding and selecting equivalents, linguistic and cultural differences should be taken into account as much as possible to avoid direct and mechanical substitution. In addition, equivalence replacement may change the linguistic characteristics and cultural flavor of the source language, and in the process of using equivalence replacement, the original flavor of the source language is maintained as much as possible. Despite these challenges, equivalence substitution is still a very effective translation strategy. In the context of globalization, equivalence substitution provides a way to solve linguistic and cultural differences, promote communication and understanding between different languages and cultures, and provide a way of cross-cultural communication, while respecting each other's cultural characteristics, Promote the smooth conduct of cross-cultural communication (CHAI & GUO, 2022).

3.3 Naturalization and Alienation Strategies

Naturalization and foreignization are two translation strategies that take two completely different approaches when dealing with cultural and

linguistic differences between the source and target languages. Naturalization emphasizes making the translated text conform to the rules and customs of the target language and culture as much as possible, so that the reader feels like reading the original target language text rather than the translation; Alienation emphasizes the preservation of the character and flavor of the source language, even if this may cause the translation to appear unfamiliar or unaccustomed in the target language environment. The advantage of naturalization strategy is that it improves the readability and comprehension of the target text. By using the expression methods and habits of the target language, readers can understand and accept the target text more easily and naturally. However, excessive naturalization may lead to the loss of the original flavor of the source language and the loss of the style, tone and cultural connotation of the source text. In contrast, alienation strategy tries its best to retain the characteristics and flavor of the source language, even though it may make the translation seem strange or unaccustomed in the target language environment. The advantage of alienation strategy is that it retains the uniqueness and cultural characteristics of the source text, so that readers can experience the charm of the source language and culture. However, excessive alienation may cause the translation to be difficult to understand, confusing and uncomfortable for the reader. In the actual translation process, naturalization and foreignization are not mutually exclusive, but can be used in combination. An excellent translation should be able to find a proper balance between naturalization and foreignization, keeping the characteristics and flavor of the source text while taking into account the understanding and acceptance of the target language readers (Nie, 2021).

4. HOW TO APPLY THESE STRATEGIES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

4.1 Use Contextual Information Appropriately to Optimize Translation

Context is the environment in which language is used, including physical environment, social environment, cultural environment, and the psychological state of language users. Contextual information plays an important role in language communication, affecting language understanding and interpretation. In the process of translation, the processing of contextual information directly affects the quality and effect of the translation. The contextual information of the source text includes many factors outside the language, such as the author's background, the

time and place of writing, the characteristics of the target audience, and the type and style of the text, which will affect the understanding of the original text. For example, the same word may have completely different meanings in different contexts. Only when the context of the source text is fully understood can the translator accurately understand the meaning of the original text and avoid mistranslation (Ziling, 2021). The contextual information of the target language is a key factor in determining how the target language is received and understood. The translator needs to consider the readers, living background, language habits, cultural cognition, as well as expectations and needs of the target language, flexibly use the contextual information in translation, adjust the choice of language and the way of expression, so as to make the target language more in line with the context of the target language and be more acceptable and understood by the target readers. The specific implementation steps are shown in Figure 1 below.

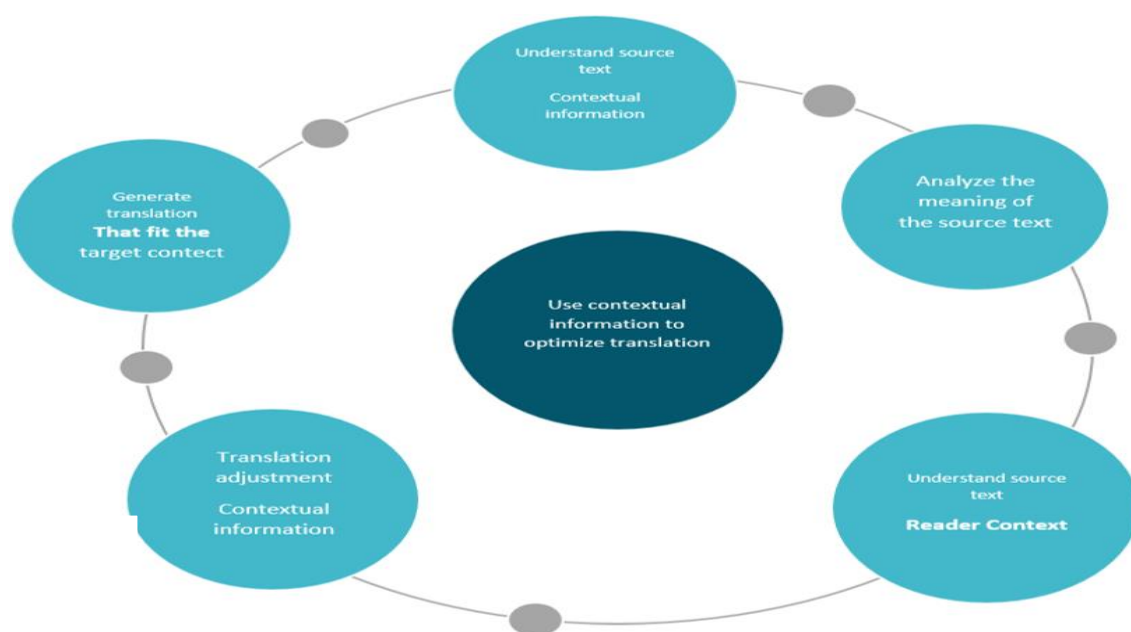


Figure 1: The Process of Using Contextual Information to Optimize Translation

4.2 Consider the Target Audience of the Translation and its Cultural Background

In translation activities, the target audience and its cultural background must be taken into account. Translation is not only a conversion between the source language and the target language, but also a cross-cultural communication process. The acceptance and feedback of the target audience directly determine the success of translation. Therefore, when dealing with the text, translators should not only fully understand the

source text, but also deeply understand the cultural background of the target readers, so as to better convey the information and meet the reading needs (Qianqian & Su, 2020). Therefore, understanding the cultural background of the target reader can help the translator better understand the hidden meaning of the source text, avoid mistranslations and disambiguations, and improve the accuracy of translation. In different cultural backgrounds, the same information may need to be expressed in different language resources to make it easier for readers to understand and accept, which requires translators to flexibly use the target language and choose the most suitable vocabulary and expression for the target readers, so that the translation is not only faithful to the original text, but also in line with the language habits and cultural expectations of the target readers. Moreover, paying attention to the cultural background of target readers can help translators deal with cultural conflicts more effectively. There may be great differences between the cultures of the source language and the target language, which may lead to difficulties in translation. Translators need to fully consider the cultural background of target readers and find the best translation strategies, such as cultural adaptation, annotation, additional translation, subtranslation, etc. To deal with these cultural conflicts, the translation can not only accurately convey the information of the source text, but also be accepted and understood by the target readers (Q. Liu, 2022).

4.3 To Solve the Problem of Cultural Difference Through Equivalent Replacement and Cultural Adaptation

When we talk about translation, we are not only talking about the conversion between languages, but on a deeper level, translation is a bridge between cultures, and it is the transmission of information and ideas between different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, solving the problem of cultural differences is an indispensable part of the translation process, and equivalent replacement and cultural adaptation are two important strategies to solve the problem of cultural differences. Equivalent substitutions are particularly useful for dealing with cultural elements that have definite equivalents, such as food, clothing, customs, and so on. For example, when translating a Chinese novel into English, "Spring Festival" might be translated as "Chinese New Year" and "Mid-Autumn Festival" might be translated as "Mid-Autumn festival". However, not all cultural elements have clear equivalents, and cultural adaptation is particularly important when dealing with such situations. Cultural adaptation is a more active strategy, which requires the translator to deeply understand the cultural

background of the source text and the target text, and find a balance between the two. It usually involves modifying the original text to a certain extent, so as to make the translation more in line with the expectations of the target readers. For example, when translating an American film into a Chinese audience, some of the punchlines with American characteristics may need to be modified or replaced to suit the Chinese audience's sense of humor, and the translator can ensure that the translation meets the cultural requirements of the target text while conveying the message of the source text.

5. CONCLUSION

In general, no matter what kind of translation task is faced, it is necessary to fully understand and consider the cultural differences between the source language and the target language, respect and understand the cultural background of the target readers, and properly use strategies such as equivalent replacement and cultural adaptation. In the context of globalization, it is necessary to cultivate keen insight and coping ability of cultural differences to provide more accurate and effective translation services, truly make translation a bridge of cross-cultural communication, provide better reading experience for readers around the world, and promote the sustainable development and progress of translation.

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