

From “Information Transmission” to “Meaning Reconstruction”: A Study on the English Translation of Cultural and Tourism Planning Texts from the Perspective of Communicative Translation——A Case Study of *The 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development*

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Abstract

With the implementation of the 13th Five-Year Plan, the breadth and depth of Chinese culture in the world has been expanding with the improvement of China's international influence. Therefore, the development of culture and tourism has become more prominent in the overall work of the Party and the state. The English translation of cultural and tourism planning texts involves not only linguistic conversion but also the reconstruction of policy meaning in a cross-cultural context. Taking *The 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development* as an example, this study examines the shifting mechanism from “information transmission” to “meaning reconstruction” in the translation process from the perspective of communicative translation theory. The study proposes a “three-dimensional dynamic reconstruction” strategy, covering lexical, syntactic, and discursive levels. At the lexical level, a “policy semantic field” is constructed to achieve contextualized translation of high-frequency verbs. At the syntactic level, “subject explicitation-logical structuring” is adopted to resolve challenges in translating non-subject and long sentences. At the discursive level, the word order and logical relationships are reconstructed according to the cognitive path of target language readers to make information explicit. Adopting case analysis, this study verifies the effectiveness of the strategy in enhancing the acceptability and communicative effect of translations, providing a practical path for translating policy texts with Chinese characteristics from “accurate transmission” to “deep acceptance”.

Keywords

Cultural and tourism planning texts; Communicative translation; Meaning reconstruction; *The 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development*

1. Introduction

The deep integration of culture and tourism is not only a natural extension of daily practices but also a crucial

component of national development strategies. Since the 13th Five-Year Plan period, culture and tourism have become an increasingly prominent part in promoting social progress. Against the backdrop of profound global changes and ongoing globalization, Chinese approaches to cultural and tourism development urgently require effective cross-cultural dissemination through translation.

However, most existing studies remain focused on lexical-syntactic translation, neglecting the need for meaning regeneration in policy texts during cross-cultural communication. This has led to “cultural discount” and “comprehension barriers” in the international dissemination of such texts. Thus, how to enable international readers not only to understand the words but also to grasp its logic and identify with the values has become a pressing issue.

As we all know, translation should strive to cross cultural boundaries, enabling the Chinese story to transform from “being transmitted” to “being understood”, thereby breaking down barriers in cross-cultural communication and demonstrating China’s image as a major country in the process of globalization. As a core text for conveying China’s concepts of cultural and tourism governance, the English translation of *The 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development* (hereinafter referred to as *The Plan*) not only involves linguistic conversion but also relates to the reconstruction of cultural meanings. Based on the communicative translation theory, this paper puts forward the core concept of “meaning reconstruction”. That is, the English translation of cultural and tourism planning texts should be based on the cognitive habits of target language readers, and realize the effective transmission of policy meanings through a dynamic process of semantic adaptation, logical reorganization, and cultural reconciliation. This perspective regards translation as an act of cross-cultural meaning negotiation, aiming to provide references for the translation practice of cultural and tourism planning texts.

2. Text Characteristics and Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Multifunctional Nature of *The Plan*

Texts can be classified into three types: expressive texts, informative texts, and vocative texts (Newmark, 2001). *The Plan* focuses on conveying the achievements and future plans of cultural and tourism development, emphasizing objective statements with few subjective judgments. Therefore, its core attributes align with the definition of informative texts. However, a deeper analysis reveals that it also serves vocative functions and expressive functions. When it comes to the vocative functions, they include attracting international cooperation and promoting China’s cultural and tourism models. In terms of the expressive functions, one typical instance is demonstrating cultural confidence by using terms like “rural revitalization”. This multifunctional nature places higher demands on its English translation and the linguistic features and translation challenges of *The Plan* are manifested at three levels.

At the lexical level, the source text contains three typical categories of words. Firstly, there are proper nouns representing places and institutions (such as “粤港澳大湾区”). Secondly, there are a large number of culture-loaded terms carrying Chinese characteristics (such as “红色旅游”), which require meaning reconstruction on the premise of maintaining cultural fidelity to ensure that international readers can accurately understand their policy orientation and practical value. Thirdly, there are high-frequency repetitive synonyms (such as “推动” “推进”), which need to be translated differently according to specific contexts to avoid monotony and rigidity.

In terms of syntactic expression, since the text focuses on specific measures at the government level, the sentence structure is mainly predicate-object structure, showing the characteristics of “dense non-subject sentences” and “intertwined long and short sentences”. Among them, the action agent in non-subject sentences is ambiguous and needs to be clarified in combination with the policy context. For instance, the example “加强旅游交通设施建设” requires to be identified the subject such as “government” or “enterprises” based on its policy context. In addition, long sentences often consist of parallel short sentences forming a “general-specific” logic (such as “尊重企业主体地位, 加强政策引导, 改善营商环境”), where the logical relationships between short sentences need to be made explicit through translation.

In terms of discourse construction, as a long-term national development plan, *The Plan* covers various fields such as tourism products and cultural industries, mainly adopting objective descriptions with few commentative sentences. At the same time, Chinese expressions emphasize implicit logic, and the connection between sentences and paragraphs relies on semantic coherence rather than explicit conjunctions (such as cause-effect or progressive relationships). This forms a significant difference from the English discourse habit of explicit cohesion, which is likely to lead to logical discontinuities in the translated text.

2.2 Research on Communicative Translation Theory

Communicative translation is primarily suitable for informative texts and defined communicative translation as an approach where the translator attempts to make the effect produced by the translated text on target language readers similar to that produced by the original text on the original readers (Newmark, 2001). Hatim and Mason (1990) held similar views, regarding communicative translation as any method or approach realizing communicative process in a social context. Munday (2001) compared Newmark's semantic translation and communicative translation from 8 parameters, including the focus of senders and receivers, culture, time and source, relationship with the source language, use of source language forms, forms of the target language, scope of application, and evaluation criteria.

Domestic research on Newmark's communicative translation theory mainly focuses on its application, and is mostly based on the frameworks of Newmark and Munday, with an emphasis on the accuracy of information transmission and exploring translation methods and techniques at micro levels (e.g., public signs, news English, subtitle translation, culture-loaded terms). Among domestic scholars, Zhang, Zhu, and Zhang (2023) studied biomedical texts and proposed that it is necessary to combine text functions with readers' cognition and adopt methods such as free translation, logical explication, and terminology unification to balance accuracy and acceptability. Wang (2021) emphasized the core position of this theory in applied translation. Xie (2020) focused on popular science translation and advocated a communicative strategy oriented to readers' acceptance. Duan and Tang (2018) discussed the principles for the English translation of store names from the perspective of practical norms. On the whole, existing studies cover multiple practical fields, but there is less attention paid to the persuasiveness and action orientation of policy texts.

2.3 Extension of Communicative Translation Theory

This study extends Newmark's communicative translation theory into a "three-dimensional meaning transmission" framework to adapt to the complex communication needs of cultural and tourism planning texts.

Core Meaning: It refers to the specific content of policy measures, i.e., the clear action objectives and implementation paths in this text. This type of information is the basis of policy communication, and translation must ensure the accuracy of data and terminology to enable international readers to grasp the specific arrangements of China's cultural and tourism development.

Contextual Meaning: This concept focuses on the in-depth development logic behind the measures, i.e., the industry background and systematic thinking of policy formulation. Such content needs to be explicated through translation to help readers understand the relevance and foresight of policy measures.

Value Meaning: The values of such texts embody the governance philosophy and cultural positions. This type of meaning is the core of China's wisdom in cultural and tourism governance. Translation needs to go beyond literal translation and enable international readers to perceive the value orientation and the responsibility of a major country behind the policies through context supplementation and cultural interpretation.

These three levels of meaning are interrelated, for while the core carries the message, the context serves as the bridge, and the value meaning embodies. Consequently, they together form a complete meaning system for the cross-cultural communication of cultural and tourism planning texts.

3. "Three-dimensional Dynamic Reconstruction" Translation Strategy and Case Studies

3.1 Lexical Level: Dynamic Transformation Driven by "Policy Semantic Field"

As *The Plan* primarily describes specific measures, it contains many high-frequency repeated synonyms. However, English avoids repetition, and the same translation for synonyms will result in monotony in the translated text with poor contextual adaptation, reducing overall translation quality. To address this, this paper proposes a "policy semantic field" approach: selecting translation equivalents based on the policy scenario in which verbs are located and constructing a "verb-scene" correspondence pattern.

Case 1: Contextualized Translation of "推动"

Context 1 (Credit Supervision):

ST:, 推动实施信用分级分类监管。

TT: ..., to facilitate the implementation of credit-based classification supervision.

In policy discourse, “推动” does not simply correspond to “promote”. Its essence is a process of institutional implementation characterized by government leadership, gradual implementation, and multi-collaboration. On one hand, it relies on policy levers such as laws, regulations, finance, and taxation to promote implementation. On the other hand, the “pilot-implementation” scheme can reduce institutional frictions, and it depends on the coordination of the central government, local governments, industries, and enterprises. In translation, verbs that convey both policy leverage and collaborative implementation are needed. Therefore, “facilitate” not only reflects the collaborative process of institutional implementation, embedding regulatory mechanisms into local enforcement, industry self-discipline, and enterprise operations, but avoids the overgeneralization of “promote”, aligning with the official discourse habit of gradual policy implementation.

Context 2 (Industry Regulation):

ST:, 推动网络表演经纪机构规范化和网络主播职业化。

TT: ..., the government will foster the standardization of online-performance agencies and the professionalization of live-streaming hosts.

Compared to the previous case, the policy semantic field here has shifted. The former involves top-down institutional implementation by means of laws, regulations, financial, and taxation levers. While the latter shifts to a “industry regulation” context, aiming to achieve bottom-up professionalization and self-regulation through institutional implementation. Here, the term not only includes the meaning of promotion through policy, but also reflects the dynamic process of multi-collaboration.

The word “foster” is often used in English policy discourse in phrases like “government foster innovation/standards/professionalism”, carrying multiple meanings of government support, resource input, environment building, and gradual development. It not only implies the leading role of the system but also reflects the process of multi-construction of the ecosystem by platforms, institutions, live-streaming hosts, and training institutions, and also forms a semantic echo with “professionalization”, enabling readers to perceive the whole process from “disordered growth” to “standardized development”. Therefore, this translation can map the information of “policy-collaboration-gradual progress” from Chinese into English, avoiding repetition and accurately conforming to the policy context.

Therefore, driven by the “policy semantic field”, selecting appropriate equivalents based on the different policy contexts of “推动” avoids synonymous repetition, enhances contextual adaptation, and improves translation quality, establishing a dynamic correspondence.

3.2 Syntactic Level: Reconstruction Model of “Subject Explicitation-logical Layering”

To address the challenges of translating non-subject and long sentences, traditional strategies often adopt strategies such as passive voice and splitting, which may lead to obscure translations. This paper proposes a reconstruction model. That is to clarify the action agent firstly and then reorganize the logic according to the pattern of “objective-measure-effect”.

Case 2: Translation of Multi-Agent Non-Subject Sentences

ST: 尊重企业主体地位, 加强政策引导, 改善营商环境, 培育骨干文化和旅游企业, 支持中小微企业专业化特色化发展。

TT: While the government strengthens policy guidance and improves the business environment to respect the dominant position of enterprises, the market will foster leading cultural and tourism enterprises and support the specialized and distinctive development of micro, small and medium-sized ones.

The source text consists of coordinate verbs without subjects, and literal translation may result in a wordy structure. According to the reconstruction model, the two action agents are clarified as the government and the market. The former is responsible for the three institutional supply actions, which include respecting the dominant role of enterprises, strengthening policy guidance, and improving the business environment. The latter, under the environment created by the government, accomplishes two tasks of cultivating leading cultural and tourism enterprises and supporting the professional and distinctive growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises.

The translated text adopts a “while” clause to carry the government’s three measures, and the main clause assigns the market two outcomes. This incorporates the originally parallel five verbs into a single long sentence with a “objective-measure-effect” structure, which not only clearly distinguishes the roles of government and market but also conforms to the English expression.

3.3 Discursive Level: Logic Explication Guided by “Cognitive Path”

Chinese policy texts rely on implicit logic, while English requires explicit cohesion. This paper proposes cognitive path reconstruction: adjusting sentence order and adding logical connectors according to the “what-why-how” cognitive sequence of target readers.

Case 3: Reorganization of Paragraph Logic

ST: 深入推进大众旅游

坚持标准化和个性化相统一，供给侧和需求侧协同发力，更好满足人民群众特色化、多层次旅游需求。优化旅游消费环境、拓展旅游消费领域。

TT: Advancing Mass Tourism

We will work to better meet the public’s diverse and multi-tiered travel needs by balancing standardization with personalization and coordinating supply-side with demand-side efforts. This includes improving the tourism consumption environment and expanding its sectors.

The core of translating this paragraph lies in explicating the implicit logical chain of “general objective-sub-objective-implementation path” in the source text, so as to align with English readers’ linear thinking mode of “main points-reasons”. Specifically, the translation refines the macro policy goal of “深入推进大众旅游” into an independent title to establish the core of the full text. It then identifies “满足……需求” as the ultimate objective and places it at the beginning as the logical starting point. Subsequently, the conjunction “by” is used to clearly mark the two abstract principles of the unity of balancing standardization with personalization and coordinating supply-side with demand-side efforts as the core means. Finally, it naturally introduces the two specific measures to construct a clear, progressive cognitive path from “ultimate objective” to “core strategies” and then to “specific measures”. Through explicit logical connections, the original semantic coordinate structure is completely broken and the optimal reorganization of the information structure is realized.

4. Conclusion

Taking *The 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development* as an example, this study validates the effectiveness of the “three-dimensional dynamic reconstruction” strategy in the English translation of cultural and tourism planning texts. The research shows that the core of translation is not “replicating the source text” but “reconstructing meaning” in a cross-cultural context. Through the contextual adaptation of vocabulary, the explication of the subject in syntax, and the cognitive reorganization of discourse, the wisdom of China’s cultural and tourism development can truly “enter” the cognitive system of international readers.

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