

# Study on the C-E Translation of Government Work Reports from 2019 to 2023 from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology

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**Abstract.** Eco-translatology is a translation theory integrated with ecology. Publicity translation has a vital impact on making Chinese voices go global. Taking the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* from 2019 to 2023 as an example, this paper analyzes their translation methods from the perspective of "three-dimensional" transformation, including linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. At present, eco-translatology seldom focuses on the translation of publicity texts. According to the "three-dimensional" transformation, this paper aims to explore the translation rules of publicity texts with *Government Work Reports* as an example from the perspective of eco-translatology. Guided by eco-translatology, the translation of *Government Work Reports* can be further developed in the future.

**Keywords:** Eco-translatology; *Government Work Reports*; Publicity Translation; "Three-Dimensional" Transformation.

## 1. Introduction

As a text form of publicity to foreign countries, publicity text shows the thoughts, theories, values, etc. of a country. Publicity translation is to translate foreign publicity materials from Chinese to foreign languages, which is intertwined with national image, harmonious international development environment, culture and "going global" of enterprises.[1] Publicity translation can be interpreted from broad and narrow senses, and that from the narrow sense includes the translation of government documents and announcements. [2] *Government Work Reports* are official documents of the People's Republic of China, which contain the work review of the previous year, the work tasks of that year, the governmental self-construction and so on. *Government Work Reports* can effectively reflect the will of the country and the wishes of the people. Good publicity of *Government Work Reports* plays an indispensable role in disseminating Chinese culture and sharing the Chinese experience. The translation of *Government Work Reports* should objectively and accurately reflect Chinese characteristics.

As a translation theory put forward by Hu Gengshen, a professor from Tsinghua University, eco-translatology studies translation from the perspective of ecology and regards translation as an ecological balance. Thus, translators should adapt to the linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. At present, eco-translatology is mostly used to study translation thoughts and translation teaching as well as guide the translation of works. Meanwhile, it is less used to study the translation of publicity texts such as *Government Work Reports*. As a translation theory, the "three-dimensional" transformation of eco-translatology can effectively instruct the international publicity translation. Under the guidance of eco-translatology, this paper analyzes the translation methods and strategies of the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* from 2019 to 2023 from the perspective of three dimensions. It aims at exploring the ecological translation characteristics of the publicity text guided by eco-translatology, how to apply the "three-dimensional" transformation to translate the publicity text, and seeking the translation rules of the publicity text by taking *Government Work Reports* as an example.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Eco-translatology is a translation study based on ecology from the perspective of ecology. [3] Eco-translatology summarizes translation methods as "three-dimensional" transformation, that is, adaptive selection transformation focusing on linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. [4] "Translator-center" is embodied in the translator's "leading" role, and translators need to adapt and select. Adaptation refers to the adaptation to the ecological environment of translation, and selection is the choice of translation. [5]

Eco-translatology regards the source text and the target text as the pursuit of balance between two ecological environments. Meanwhile, eco-translatology pays attention to realizing three-dimensional transformation, including linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. Linguistic dimension transformation is based on the differences between Chinese and English in terms of words, sentence structures and language forms. Realizing the transformation of linguistic dimension in the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* ensures reading fluency in the reading process. The purpose of cultural dimension transformation is to prevent cultural misreading and cultural default, accurately express culture-loaded words, and realize cultural dimension transformation in publicity texts to convey Chinese culture and enhance cultural self-confidence. The change of communicative dimension aims to achieve communicative intention and endow readers with the same reading experience as the source language when reading the publicity text. Eco-translatology emphasizes "translator-center", and translators play a leading role in the translation, which requires translators to adapt to the ecological environment of the source text, the source language and the target language, and to understand the source text and choose the target text. At the same time, translators cannot survive and develop without improving their abilities.

## 3. Analysis of C-E Translation of Government Work Reports from the Perspective of "Three-Dimensional" Transformation

Eco-translatology is a translation theory, which regards translation as an ecological balance and requires "three-dimensional" transformation in translation, including the adaptive selection transformation of linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. [6] Guided by eco-translatology and through the "three-dimensional" transformation, the objective and accurate requirements of translation of publicity texts such as *Government Work Reports* can be achieved, so as to convey Chinese cultural characteristics and achievements. This paper will analyze the representative words and sentences in the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* from 2019 to 2023 from the perspective of "three-dimensional" transformation.

### 3.1. Linguistic Dimension

The so-called adaptive selection transformation of linguistic dimension means the translator's adaptive selection transformation of linguistic form during the translation, which is implemented in various aspects. [7] There are many differences in sentence patterns and words between Chinese and English, so translators should pay attention to the characteristics of sentence patterns and words in *Government Work Reports* and adjust the vocabulary and syntax of the target text. The study in this paper is from the aspects of part of speech, logic, repetitive words, subject-free sentences and parallel structures.

#### 3.1.1. Lexical Level

##### (1) Conversion of Part of Speech

Source Text: 交出一份人民满意、世界瞩目、可以载入史册的答卷。(2021)

Target Text: ...which have won the approval of our people and global recognition, will be remembered in history.

Chinese is dynamic and verbs are frequently used, while English is static and prefers to use nouns. The source text “满意” and “瞩目” are expressed by verbs, while nouns are used in the translation of *Government Work Reports*. In Chinese, phrases such as “人民满意” can be converted by changing parts of speech in English.

## (2) Manifestation of Logic

Source Text: ...广大人民群众勤劳付出、共克时艰，诠释了百折不挠的民族精神，彰显了人民是真正的英雄，...(2021)

Target Text: Our people worked hard and fought adversity in close solidarity and with the unyielding spirit of the Chinese nation, thus proving themselves true heroes.

Chinese sentence groups are mostly advanced in a certain temporal order and logical order. Logical words do not appear in the source text, but they have already conveyed causality. In the target text, the logical word "thus", expressing causal relationship, is added before “彰显了人民是真正的英雄”, which highlights logic in English conversion, thus realizing the conversion of linguistic dimension.

## (3) Treatment of Repetitive Words

Source Text: 要大幅提升防控能力，坚决防止疫情反弹，坚决守护人民健康。(2020)

Target Text: We need to greatly enhance our prevention and control capability, resolutely prevent a resurgence of covid-19, and protect the health of our people.

"坚决" appears twice in the source text with the same structure in the following sentence. On the linguistic dimension, the repetitive words in Chinese lead to the same sentence pattern for emphasis and neat form, while repetitive words in English will cause burdensome influence. To realize the transformation of linguistic dimension, only one word can be translated, and two sentences or phrases are connected with "and".

### 3.1.2. Syntactic Level

#### (1) Subject-Free Sentences

Source Text: 中国特色大国外交成果丰硕。(2020)

Target Text: We achieved fruitful outcomes in pursuing China's major country diplomacy.

There are some sentences whose subjects are hidden in the context of *Government Work Reports*. In terms of linguistic dimension, except for special cases such as imperative sentences, English sentences without subjects cannot appear. Under this circumstance, the translator should observe the whole situation of the sentence and add appropriate subjects to realize the conversion between Chinese and English from the syntactic aspect of the linguistic dimension. Hence, “外交成果颇丰” means an achievement made by Chinese people, so the subject "we" is added in translation to transform linguistic dimension and avoid the subject-free sentence in English expression.

#### (2) Parallel Structure

Source Text: ...为企业雪中送炭，助企业焕发生机。(2022)

Target Text: ...in order to provide enterprises with timely assistance and help them generate fresh vitality.

“为企业”和“助企业” are parallel structures. From the perspective of language, the use of parallel structure in Chinese is to enhance mood and momentum, and produce structural beauty. In addition, Chinese can connect two sentences with commas, but that is not the case for English. Therefore, to realize the transformation of linguistic dimension, two different verbs can be used to translate “为” and “助”. "Enterprises" only appears once, and the two sentences are connected by "and".

Chinese and English belong to different language families. From the perspective of language, there are many differences between Chinese and English. In the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports*, we should consider the differences in expression between Chinese and English. Thus, translators should accurately grasp the differences between Chinese and English in translation, and choose the translated text based on the adaptation to the source text, so that the target text can conform to the readers' language habits to the largest extent and transform linguistic dimensions.

### 3.2. Cultural Dimension

"To overcome the obstacles caused by cultural differences and ensure the information exchange, translators need to pay attention to the differences in the nature and expression of things between the source language culture and the target language culture. To avoid misinterpreting the source text from the perspective of the target language culture, translators need to adapt to the whole cultural system to which the source language belongs and emphasize the transmission effect of cultural connotations in the translation." [8] Every country has its culture, which contains unique cultural connotations. There are many culture-loaded words in *Government Work Reports*, including some idioms, proverbs and common sayings. Hence, proper translation methods and strategies should be adopted when translating culture-loaded words in such publicity texts, which can neither lack the national cultural connotation nor misinterpret the culture by readers, so as to realize the transformation of cultural dimension.

#### Example 1

Source Text: ...960多万建档立卡贫困人口通过易地扶贫搬迁摆脱了“一方水土难养一方人”的困境, ...(2021)

Target Text: ...including more than 9.6 million registered poor people who were relocated from inhospitable areas;

“一方水土难养一方人” originates from “一方水土养一方人”, which comes from *Fire Spreading*, Volume 1, Chapter 15 written by Liang Bin that “一方水土养一方人’嘛, 靠山吃山, 靠水吃水”. It is a Chinese saying, which means that the natural resources of a place can feed the people there. In other words, the human history of a place is influenced by the local natural resources and characteristics. “一方水土难养一方人” describes the dilemma of poor areas and penniless people before getting rid of poverty, which means that the local natural resources are difficult to feed the local people due to the negative conditions and unsuitable for people to live with low living standards. This phrase is translated into "inhospitable areas", which refers to areas with poor conditions or unsuitable for living, thus avoiding misunderstanding and cultural missing to transform cultural dimensions.

#### Example 2

Source Text: ...以“十年磨一剑”精神在关键核心领域实现重大突破。...(2021)

Target Text: ...just as a blacksmith in the past would spend years forging the perfect sword.

“十年磨一剑” comes from the Chinese poem from Tang Dynasty *Blacksmith* written by Jia Dao that “十年磨一剑, 双刃未曾试”. It means that a sword has been ground for ten years, only waiting for one day to come in handy for great achievements. It is often used as a metaphor for achievements after years of training. The spirit implied in this phrase is to calm down and constantly persist for betterment. It is translated into "just like a blacksmith in the past would spend years forging the perfect sword", which connects with the ancient poem *Blacksmith* and conveys the spiritual connotation of “十年磨一剑”, effectively transmitting Chinese culture and realizing the transformation of cultural dimension.

#### Example 3

Source Text: 让更多劳动者掌握一技之长、让三百六十行行行人才辈出。(2022)

Target Text: These efforts will enable more workers to acquire marketable skills and large numbers of talented people to come to the fore in all sectors.

“三百六十行行行人才辈出” stems from “三百六十行，行行出状元”，which is a Chinese proverb. According to *Collection of Qing Dynasty: Agriculture and Commerce* written by Xu Ke, “三十六行者，种种职业也。就其分工约计之，曰三十六行；倍之，则七十二行；十之则三百六十行。” “三百六十行” is a general term that refers to all walks of life. "principal graduate" is the first place in the imperial examination system in ancient China, which can be called "talent". Therefore, “三百六十行，行行出状元” means that no matter in which industry, there can be people who have made outstanding achievements. In the target text, instead of translating “三百六十行” into “360 industries”, the translator conveys the connotation of “各行各业” (all walks of life), avoiding cultural misreading and transforming cultural dimension.

When translating *Government Work Reports*, aiming at the transformation of cultural dimension, translators need to have cultural self-confidence, fully understand the culture-loaded words in the publicity text for cross-cultural communication, and avoid cultural misreading and misinterpretation while avoiding cultural lack. Meanwhile, translators should accurately convey cultural connotations and well disseminate Chinese culture in *Government Work Reports*. Translators are required to have cross-cultural awareness and cross-cultural ability, so that foreigners can understand the connotation of Chinese culture and transform cultural dimensions.

### 3.3. Communicative Dimension

“The so-called adaptive selection transformation of communicative dimension means that translators pay attention to the adaptive selection transformation of bilingual communicative intentions during the translation.”[9] Publicity texts such as *Government Work Reports* aim to enable foreign people to know about China's achievements and wisdom. Translators are not only required to heed the transformation of linguistic and cultural dimensions, but also realize the communicative intention of the target text.

#### Example 1

Source Text: ...持续纠治“四风”，...(2019)

Target Text: We took stern action against formalities performed for formalities' sake, bureaucratism, hedonism, and extravagance.

“四风” includes formalism, bureaucracy, hedonism and extravagance. Formalism means only making superficial efforts, neither completing the work in depth nor stressing reality. Bureaucracy refers to the fact that some cadres are still ridden by the idea of "rule by man", which is divorced from reality and the masses. Hedonism and extravagance mean that some officials only care about their enjoyment, ignoring the sufferings of the people but resorting to extravagance and waste. During the translation, it is necessary to achieve communicative intention. For foreigners, if it is literally translated into "four feng" or "si feng", foreigners fail to know that “四风” is four unhealthy trends. Hence, it is necessary to explain its four aspects clearly in translation to realize the transformation of the communicative dimension.

#### Example 2

Source Text: 面对新情况新变化，我们坚持不搞“大水漫灌”式强刺激，.....(2019)

Target Text: Facing new circumstances and developments, we were firm in choosing not to adopt a deluge of strong stimulus policies,...

“大水漫灌” is a word about macro-control in *Government Work Reports*. Its original intention refers to a way adopted in agricultural irrigation. In the economy, it refers to the governmental massive stimulus to promote economic development, emphasizing the governmental excessive intervention in the economy. If it is literally translated as "flood irrigation", foreigners will misunderstand it as a way of agricultural irrigation, which has nothing to do with the economy. Thus, it is translated into "a deluge of strong stimulus policies", which means that powerful stimulus policies emerge like a flood. Such a translation can make foreigners understand “大水漫灌”, thus accurately conveying the connotation and realizing the intention of communication.

### Example 3

Source Text: 持续推进“放管服”改革(2019)

Target Text: We will deepen reforms to streamline administration and delegate power, improve regulation, and upgrade services.

“放管服” is the abbreviation of “简政放权、放管结合、优化服务”. “放” means that the government decentralizes power and reduces administrative power without a legal basis. “管” refers to the government innovating the supervision system and realizing the promotion of the supervision function. “服” refers to service and the government should optimize its service to the people, so as to better serve the people and be responsible to the people. “放管服” is an abbreviation with Chinese characteristics, and there are no English words and phrases that can directly correspond to it in English. Hence, “放管服” should be explained in translation, so that foreigners can know its connotation and realize their communicative intentions.

### Example 4

Source Text: 坚持和完善社会主义基本经济制度，坚持“两个毫不动摇”。(2019)

Target Text: We will uphold and further improve the basic socialist economic system, and work unswervingly both to consolidate and develop the public sector and to encourage, support and guide the development of the non-public sector.

“两个毫不动摇” is a vital measure to uphold and improve China's basic socialist economic system, including the unswerving consolidation and development of the public economy and unswerving encouragement, support and guidance of developing the non-public economy. If “两个毫不动摇” is literally translated as "two unwavering upholds", foreigners fail to know what they mean, so the translator unfolds the specific content of “两个毫不动摇” in translation, thus realizing the accurate transmission of its connotation and realizing the purpose of communication.

Different translation methods will lead to various translation results. Translators should adapt to the ecological environment of the source text, the source language and the target language when translating *Government Work Reports*. In addition, the translation should conform to the readers' expression habits and accurately convey the information that *Government Work Reports* needs to disseminate, so as to achieve the purpose of communication. Hence, readers can harvest a good reading experience when reading the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports*, thus realizing the transformation of the communicative dimension.

E translation of *Government Work Reports* is to publicize Chinese style and characteristics to English-speaking countries. Guided by the "three-dimensional" transformation of eco-translatology, the translation of *Government Work Reports* can promote cross-cultural communication and play the role of publicity text. Under the change of linguistic dimension, C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* can overcome the language barriers between Chinese and English. Through the transformation of the cultural dimension, China can adhere to its excellent traditional culture and avoid foreign readers' misinterpretation of Chinese culture. Through the transformation of the communicative dimension, China's achievements, thoughts and culture in *Government Work Reports*

can be objectively and accurately conveyed, which enhances China's ability to communicate with the world and makes readers understand China.

#### 4. Conclusion

Eco-translatology is a new exploration of translation, which integrates ecology into translation and pursues the ecological balance between the source text and translation of *Government Work Reports*. Based on the "three-dimensional" transformation principle of eco-translatology, this paper explores the translation rules of C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* from 2019 to 2023 from three dimensions, namely linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension. At the level of linguistic dimension, the translator considers the language differences between Chinese and English to select the most appropriate words and sentences. At the level of the cultural dimension, the translator accurately disseminates the Chinese culture in *Government Work Reports* by considering the cultural systems of China and English-speaking countries. At the level of the communicative dimension, the translator promotes the realization of communicative purpose based on accurately translating the original *Government Work Reports*, so that readers can precisely understand China. However, the analysis of the "three-dimensional" transformation in the C-E translation of *Government Work Reports* in this paper is not comprehensive enough. The principle of "three-dimensional" transformation of eco-translatology can effectively guide the translation of *Government Work Reports* and promote the further development of international publicity translation in the future.

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