Localization of the Translation Practice Teaching in Application-Oriented Universities

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Abstract

The term “cultural turn” was proposed by Susan Bassnett, a leading figure of the school of Cultural Translation. In the practice of translation, the influence of cultural factors should be taken into consideration. The same is true in translation practice teaching. Application-oriented universities should pay attention to the exploration and dissemination of their regional culture. Taking Baoding University as an example, its translation practice teaching should highlight the characteristics of Baoding. This paper collected some raw language materials including tourist attractions, literature works, film and television dramas, dishes and menus, and industrial products in Baoding. Through the analysis of the tour commentary, Baoding dialect, Baofu cuisine and Baoding folk customs, and some ads of Baoding-based products, systematically elaborates how to integrate local culture into translation practice teaching, and accomplish the localization of the translation practice teaching, so as to better convey the voice of Baoding.

Keywords

Localization of the Teaching Practice Translation, Tourism Commentary, Baoding Literary Works, Automobile Advertisement, Baofu Cuisine, Baoding Dialect, Baoding Folk Customs

1. Introduction

“Cultural turn” is named by Susan Bassnett after the terminology of “text type” put forward by her tutor Katharina Reisse. Its specific meaning is that translation is not only a language transcoding, but also a broader field of vision of the development of history and culture. Translation should serve social development, conform to the meaning and style of the original text, and take into account the historical and cultural background of the original text. In the practice of translation teaching, cultural factors should not be ignored.
As application-oriented universities, the translation practice teaching is penetrating into the local culture. Therefore in the curriculum system, localized materials should be added to senior courses, to achieve the cultural turn of translation from books to life, to the translation of local color. Taking the translation practice teaching in Baoding University as an example, this paper summarizes the cultural factors related to Baoding, including tourism commentary, literature works, dialect, folk customs, local cuisine, and leading industries, so as to provide some ideas for the localization of translation, boost Baoding’s local economy, and publicize Baoding’s local characteristic culture. The paper elaborates from the following aspects:

2. Relying on the Tourism Commentary and Other External Publicity Texts

In the new era, Baoding has never forgotten its aspiration to strive for progress. Under the inspiration of the 19th national congress, Baoding strives to forge ahead. The translation practice teaching should also keep up with the pace of the times and the development of Baoding, so the role of the translation practice teaching is highlighted. Baoding, an ancient city with magnificent mountains and rivers, has inherited food culture, automobile, new energy and other industries. Baoding’s local tourism attraction and industry into the teaching of translation practice can highlight the transformation of local characteristic culture.

2.1. The Tourism Commentary in Baoding for the Translation Practice Teaching

Baoding has jurisdiction over 5 districts and 16 counties (with Anxin, Rongcheng and XiongXian are included in Xiongan New Area, which were the counties of Baoding originally. Almost every county has tourism attractions. For example, Baoding City has Daci Temple (The Great Benevolence Tower) (Du, 2013), Zhili Governor’s Office (Guo, 2011), Ancient Lotus Garden, West Royal Tombs of Qing Dynasty (Ma, 2015) in Yi County, Wang’s family’s Garden Museum and Baiyintuo Scenery in Shunping County. Mancheng District has Han Tombs (The tomb of Liu Sheng, King Jing of Zhongshan State) and so on.

There are usually commentaries, slogans or signs on the scenic spots and historical sites. These materials are of great benefit to understanding the past history and local customs. How to display as much information as possible in a limited space requires the refinement of language and the precision of wording. Therefore, this part of training is very important in the translation practice teaching. Take the commentary on “The Tomb of Han Dynasty in Mancheng” (Liu, 2017) as an example:

闻名中外的满城汉墓座落于县城西南1.5 公里的陵山主峰196 米处，系西汉中山靖王刘胜及其妻窦绾之墓, 为全国重点文物保护单位, 国家 AAAA 级旅游景区。两墓共出土文物10,633 件, 其中精品文物4000 多件, 稀世珍宝“金缕玉衣”、“长信宫灯”、“错金博山炉” 等就出土于此满城也因此被誉为“金缕玉衣”的故乡。
The internationally famous Mancheng Han Tomb is located at the Main Peak of Lingshan Mountain, 1.5 kilometers to the southwest of the county, 196 meters above the ground, and it’s the tomb of Liu Sheng, King Jing of Zhong Shan State in the Western Han Dynasty and his wife Dou Wan. It’s a National-level Cultural Relics Protection Unit and a Grade AAAA tourist scenic area in China. There have been 10,633 pieces of cultural relics excavated from the two tombs, with over 4000 fine pieces, and the rare treasure Jade Shroud Sewn with Gold Wire, Gilded Bronze Changxin Palace Lamp, Bronze Pot with Engraved Dragons and Boshan Incense Burner Inlaid with Gold Decoration were just excavated here, Mancheng is thus renowned as the hometown of “Jade Shroud Sewn with Gold Wire”.

In tour commentary, there are always many specific terms, therefore the first step is to make the terminology corpus, to tackle the obstacle of word confusion. In this commentary, “满城汉墓”, “中山靖王”, “金缕玉衣”, “长信宫灯” and “错金博山炉” are the examples. Then organize the word-to-word translation to grasp every word’s meaning, in case of some information be omitted. After the lexical checking, then to the syntax and style checking, to make sure the text is fitted into the format of commentary, and is easy to accepted by the visitors.

There are still more publicity materials for Baoding’s tourist attractions that can be explored for learning and practice. Therefore, the cultural shift of the translation practice teaching must include the section of tourism commentary.

2.2. Baoding Flavor in Local Cuisine Translation

Tourism is also inseparable from local cuisine, Baoding specialties are also known as “Baofu Cuisine (保府菜)”, with Baoding local characteristics. Two of the “Three Treasures of Baoding (The triple gem of Baoding 保定三宝)” (Du, 2013) are related to food, that is, sauce and Potherb Mustard (春不老). The introduction of the menu starts from these two treasuries: “Steamed fish fillet on Potherb Mustard with Fermented Flour Paste Flavor (春不老酱蒸鱼)” and “Braised Preserved Potherb with Minced Pork (肉末春不老)”. “sauce-flavor” in cuisine is also important to a way of cooking, such as Donkey Meat with Sauce Flavor (酱香驴肉). When it comes to donkey meat, Baofu cuisine also plays an important role, with dishes including Pancake stuffed with Donkey Meat (驴肉煎饼), Baked Wheat Cake stuffed with Donkey Meat (驴肉火烧) and Roast Donkey Meat with Scallion Flavor (葱香烤驴肉), etc.

“Baofu” also has a literal connection with the dishes, such as “Sauteed Pig’s Kidney, Baoding Traditional Style (老保定溜腰花) (Han, 2014)”, “Quick-Fried Shrimp with Pig’ s Kidney, Baoding Style (直隶爆虾腰) (Han, 2014)”, “Braised Preserved Fish, Baoding Style (直隶官府烧腌鱼)” and “Marinated Walnuts (直隶腌核桃). In addition, there are dishes named after Li Hongzhang, Governor of Zhili Province in the late Qing Dynasty, for example, “Governor Li-favored dish (李鸿章烩菜)” and “Governor Li-favored Tofu (总督豆腐)”.

As other ancient cities, Baoding has some “China’s Old Brand”, which should also be included in the content of translation practice teaching, such as “槐茂..."
(Huaimao pickles—since 1671), “刘伶醉 (Liulingzui—since 628)” (Tian, 2013) and so on. In addition, there are many dishes named “Baiyangdian” with fish as the main raw material, such as “Braised Miscellaneous Fish in Baiyangdian (白洋淀炖杂鱼)” and "Braised Crucian in Baiyangdian (白洋淀焖鲫鱼)” (Zhang, 2013).

In the teaching process, terminology corpus is necessary for the students to grasp the key words, with the next step is to find more menus without format English version to do the practice and do the evaluation by peers and teachers, to make sure the correct description and showing the flavor of Baoding. Through the teaching of “Baofu Cuisine”, Baoding’s catering can be understood, as well as its history and culture, which is also a window to publicize Baoding. Therefore, this part of the content is indispensable in the localization of the translation practice teaching.

2.3. “Baoding Creation” and Its Translation Update under the Continuous Upgrading of the Industry

Baoding is building “Baoding industrial cluster”, such as the ink stone in Yi County, blowers in Gaobeidian, mechanical processing in Zhuozhou, auto parts in Dingxing, slings in Xushui, plastic products in Shunping, Bronze carving industry in Tang County, stone carving industry in Quyang, Chinese herbal medicine industry in Anguo and so on. The export and development of these industries, as well as the bidding and tendering, all need the intervention of practical translation. The Great Wall Automobile Industrial Group, the Luck Film Factory and Baoding Fengfan Co., LTD. (Liu, 2013), which advocates the development of new energy. The upgrading and development of these industries need the full support of external publicity. Therefore, it is necessary for the translation practice teaching to pay attention to this part of the industry. The update of its translation should also keep pace with the development.

Take the external publicity materials of The Great Wall automobile as an example:

“作为汽车人，我觉得有责任生产中国自己的豪华SUV，让有追求的人们能真实感受豪华、消费豪华精品。我们汇聚全球顶级专家，组成攻坚团队，经过四年的磨砺，推出了WEY品牌和展示的两款新车。我们希望WEY能带领大家走向豪华SUV的新时代，在15 - 20万元区间成为用户的购车首选”

——WEY品牌创始人 魏建军

This is the website slogan of the newly launched The Great Wall auto “WEY” series in 2017. The author’s translation is as follows:

“As a car maker, I feel the responsibility for producing China’s own luxurious SUVs. People with the pursuit can truly experience luxury and consume it. We have assembled a team of global top experts to tackle the hard parts. With four years’ research, we have launched two new models of WEY brand. We hope WEY will lead us to a new era of luxurious SUVs. It will be the first choice for users with the price 150,000 - 200,000 yuan.”

— Wei Jianjun, founder of the WEY brand
During the process of teaching, the collection of new materials is the key point. To cultivate the students’ ability to do the collection of raw language materials to keep up with the pace of development is the key point for the practice teaching. Through the translation of practical texts, it strengthens the translation practice ability, broadens the employment channels for learners, and reserves some strength for the external publicity of enterprises in Baoding area. The combination of production and learning is an indispensable part of the translation practice teaching.

3. Based on Tie Ning’s Works, Review the Memory of Baoding from 1970s to 1990s

The translation practice teaching should not only be about the translation of practical texts, but also of the local literature. Tie Ning is an outstanding writer among the third generation of Baoding Writer Group. Her works are well known at home and abroad, and the strong Baoding flavor in her works comes from her long experience of living and working in Baoding. In fact, Tie Ning was sent to the countryside as an educated youth to do the practice in Baoye County, Baoding city. Therefore, by analyzing the English translation of her works, the image of Baoding from the 1970s to 1990s can be understood. In the localization of the translation practice teaching, the analysis of translation of Tie Ning’s works is indispensable.

So far, 11 of Tie Ning’s novellas have been translated into English. Short stories featuring Baoding include Oh, Xiangxue (哦，香雪), Haystacks (麦秸垛), The Red Shirt Without Buttons (没有纽扣的红衬衫), and so on. These stories are related to the Baoding area. For example, Oh, Xiangxue is written according to Gougezhuang in Laishui County. After that, Gougezhuang has become an important tourist attraction in Laishui County. Haystacks tells the story of the educated youth’s life and love in the countryside. The Red Shirt without Buttons tells the story of people’s ideological fluctuations after the Reform and Opening up Policy, which is very typical. The translation of these works is undoubtedly the dissemination of Baoding culture, and as a practical translation teaching, the opportunity to interpret Baoding stories from the impenetrable texts cannot be overlooked. In the following, there are three aspects to explain how to put localization in translation.

3.1. The Translation of Baoding Dialect

In Tie Ning’s works, Baoding dialect often appears. The translation of dialect is one of the aspects of regional cultural communication in Baoding. Therefore, the translation of dialect from literary works will lay a foundation to the future.

Haystacks is an example to explain the translation of dialect. In Baoding dialect, the character “忙(mang)” is people’s mouth word. The character “忙” does not mean “busy” here, but “hurried”. For example, the character “忙” appears three times in Haystacks, which respectively means “Make it snappy (忙走)”,
“Go ahead and stick a needle in yourself (忙给你自己打一针)” and “wake up now (忙醒醒呀)”. The translator Denis Mair was fully aware of the regional meaning of the character “忙” and did flexible operation, which expressed the urgent tone in the original text.

The character “劫(jie)” has the meaning of “great distress, loot” in mandarin Chinese, however, in Baoding dialect, it also has the meaning of “coming from the opposite side and meet”. For example, in Haystacks, the educated youth Yang Qing works a bit slow, she is always left behind with the tied wheat, and her team leader Sesame's Mum goes back to meet her with the binding of the left wheat. The sentence “杨青跟上去，发现前边净是捆好的麦个儿。分明是大芝娘劫了她。” After the character “劫” appeared in “Sesame’s Mum clearly helped her out”, Yang Qing does not have to tie up the rest of wheat, so it is equivalent to “help”.

The same situation happens on the character “闹(nao)”. In Haystacks, it appeared twice, respectively is “那是闹日本时，栓子爹从炮楼上得来的” and “否则他也被踏上一只脚，闹个永世不得翻身”. In the first sentence, the character “闹” means Japanese invasion of China. In the second sentence, the character “闹” means “get”. The sentence translations are “Uncle Shuanzi had gotten them from a watchtower during the Japanese invasion” and “trump on him so hard (that) he could stay down for the rest of his life”.

There are many more examples like this, which cannot be taken out in one article. Through the dialect translation, it makes the target readers better understand Baoding dialect with the life there, which is regarded as a good means to publicize Baoding.

3.2. English Translation of Baoding Folk Customs

Many folk customs in Baoding are disappearing like those in other regions, such as embroidering pillowcases and watching outdoor movies. These memories are largely to be relived in literature. In Haystacks, there is one. Shen Xiaofeng falls in love with Lu Yeming, and had the sexual relation on one occasion. She wants to take this as a condition to get married, and asks Sesame’s mother about the local custom, Sesame’s mother tells her to make a pair of embroider pillowcase—pomegranate on the male’s pillow and lotus on female’s pillow. It means “having many children and grandchildren brings harmony between husband and wife”, which is exactly what Shen Xiaofeng expects on Lu Yeming.

In addition, in 1970s and 1980s, people’s recreational activities were not enriched in Baoding area. The village folks took open-air movies as almost the only collective pastime, in Haystacks, there is the vivid description, “many people sent the children to go outside the village in the day to invite relatives from other villages (许多人家一大早就打发孩子们去外村请)”. The villagers have to rent the films, such as Fighting South and North (南征北战), Song of Yimeng (沂蒙颂) and Tunnel Warfare (地道战). And the place where to see a movie has the strong local feature. It is commonly threshing floor or some broad places. The
movie screening site in *Haystacks* is the “moat pit in the east of the village”, which has long been a theater for folks from here surrounding villagers (还是以二战压底儿，早就变作包括邻村乡亲在内的电影场). Then it comes to the description of the folks going back home after the movie. “The movie was over, and the bottom of the shelter turned into a madhouse. Women called stridently to children and men coughed to get their families to follow them. (电影散了，壕坑里一片混乱。女人们尖声叫着孩子，男人们咳嗽着率领起家人。)”. Such a distinctive life scene will suddenly attract readers to the old Baoding City.

Of course, there are the big loudspeakers in the village in those days, playing notifications all day long. Movie showings were just like study meetings: the whole village was notified by loudspeaker. All Party members, League members, and poor, lower and middle peasants were among the ranks of the invited:

> *All members of the Party, and members of the league; Party members and League members! All the poor and middle peasants! A movie will be shown at nightfall tonight, a movie will be shown at nightfall tonight!* The film is called *Niemari’s Visit to China. Nimari is a foreigner. Yes, a foreigner! A foreigner visiting China is a foreigner coming to this China of ours for a visit, yes, for a visit.*

(Danis 201) (“全体的党员，全体的团员，党员团员党团员! 全体的贫下中农! 今儿黑介放电影，今儿黑介放电影! 电影叫《尼迈里访问中国》，就是外国人访问中国。尼迈里是个外国人，啊，外国人! 外国人访问中国就是到咱们中国来访问，啊，来访问……”) (Tie, 2015).

Through the understanding of folk customs, the localization factors should be added into the translation. In the thick flavor of Baoding dialect, the works of Tie Ning and the translated works by Denis Mair should be appreciated and analyzed to make the translation learning sound, colorful and flavorful. This is the localization turn which the translation practice teaching should achieve.

In addition, the translation of the distinctive names of people and places in Baoding can also be used as a reference for the translation text. Taking the rural place names as examples, the general villages are called “kou, cun, zhuang, gou, guan (“口、村、庄、沟、关)”, etc. In the translation of *Haystacks*, Denis Mair (2014) has a certain basis for translation. For example, “端村” is translated into “Duan Village”, “张庄” is translated into “Zhangzhuang”, and the place name “台儿沟” is translated into “Terrace Gully”, and “西关” is translated into “West Pass” in another work of Tie Ning’s *Oh, Fragrant Snow*.

The same is true to the translation of names. The translation of people’s names can be done by literal translation and free translation. Literal translation is based on Chinese pinyin, such as “Xiangxue (香雪)”, “Shen Xiaofeng (沈小凤)”, “Semame’s Mom (大芝娘)”, “Uncle Shuanzi (栓子叔)”, “Old man Shuanzi (栓子爷)” are all acceptable translation. For example, the wife Xiaochi “bought” from Sichuan Province is called “hua’er (花儿)”, which is translated as “Flower”, and Flower’s son is called “Five stars”.

Through these translations, the rules for the translation of the names of people and places are well-mastered, and provide corpus for the later characteristic translation in Baoding, which is the significance of the translation practice teaching.
4. Based on Films and TV Plays, Esp. Red Literature, the Red Memory of Baoding Is Promoted

Baoding is an important position of the red literature and people are familiar with a few of the works. For example, Liang Bin’s *Keep the Red Flag Flying* (红旗谱), Li Yingru’s *Fighting in Ancient City* (野火春风斗古城), Xu Guangyao’s *Little Soldier Chang Ka-tse* (小兵张嘎), Yuan Jing, Kong Jue’s *Daughters and Sons* (新儿女英雄传), Sun Li’s *Lotus Creek* (荷花淀), and so on. Teachers should pay attention to these works. What is more conducive to teaching is that these works have films and TV plays as teaching aids. Among them, *Keep the Red Flag Flying* and *Little Soldier Chang Ka-tse* both have TV series and movie resources; *Lotus Creek* and *Daughters and Sons* have movie versions.

The input of these audio and video happens mainly after class, and students are required to have a general understanding and interpretation of the original text. In class, typical scenes are captured and translated for analysis, which will be more vivid and effective. For example, in Sun Li’s *Lotus Creek—One of the Records of Baiyangdian*, there is such a paragraph with local characteristics (Liu, 2015):

> 月亮升起来了, 院子里凉爽的很, 干净的很, 白天破好的苇眉子潮润润的, 正好编席。女人坐在小院当中, 手指上缠绞着柔滑修长的苇眉子。苇眉子又薄又细, 在她怀里跳跃着。

> 要问白洋淀有多少苇地? 不知道。每年出多少苇子? 不知道。只晓得, 每年芦花飘飞芦叶黄的时候, 全淀的芦苇收割, 垛起垛来, 在白洋淀周围的广场上, 就成了一条苇子的长城。(Sun, 2011)

The moon had risen and the little courtyard was delightfully fresh and clean. The rushes split during the day were damp and supple, just waiting to be woven into mats. A woman was sitting in the yard plaiting the long soft rushes with nimble fingers. The thin, fine strands leaped and twisted in her arms.

> I can’t tell you the exact area grown with them nor the yearly output. All I know is that each year when the rush flowers blow in the breeze and the leaves turn yellow, the whole crop is cut and stacked in the squares round Baiyangdian like a Great Wall of reeds. (Yang, 1982)

Baiyangdian’s spectacular scene of reed marshes cannot be clearly expressed in words, on this occasion; video teaching can promote the role. After seeing the scene of reed marshes rising and falling in the wind, the text has a three-dimensional image, and the students have changed their words and sentences accordingly. Audio and video input, with the original text reading, appreciation of the English translation is easier.

The word “很(hen)” in “凉爽得很，干净得很” is an adverb of degree, which translates as “delightfully”. The rewording of this adverb highlights the serenity of the farm-house. What does the adjective “湿润润” mean? Why are the characters “手指” translated as “nimble finger”? Seeing the picture, the movement of fingers between the reeds is so “nimble” that the word “nimble” is necessary to the translation.
Next part are the verbs, “跳跃着” is “leaped”, but it adds the word “twisted”, which makes the reader confused. If it is not joint with video teaching, it may be hard to understand. The verb “飘飞” translates as “blow in the breeze,” reflecting the state of the reed flowers floating in the breeze. In these two paragraphs, there is also a translation of metaphor, “a Great Wall of reed” to describe that there are so many reeds. Here “长城” literally translates to “The Great Wall”. “The Great Wall” is a symbol of the Chinese nation, so literally translated as “Reed Great Wall”, it is easy to be understood and accepted.

This is just one of the examples, which reflects the local conditions and customs, topography and geomorphology of Baoding during the Resistance War against Japan. Therefore, the localization of the translation based on the movies and TV plays well combines the red literature of Baoding and achieve the purpose of propagandizing the red culture of Baoding.

To sum up, the translation practice teaching under the fertile territory of local flavor makes the learners understand more about how to serve the local resources with the translation of the texts, and the development of local institutions provides the translation practice teaching cases, and the translation practice teaching serves the local economic and cultural undertakings, the translation teaching is not only the theories’ accumulation but practice with all the tourism commentary, literary text, dialect, customs, new products, etc. During the teaching process, corpuses are to be built and the teaching can be systematically built with the effort of the application-oriented university. Only when the localization of the translation practice teaching is realized and the local environment is taken as the context of the translation practice teaching, can the learners fully comprehend the local culture and taste the local flavor.

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The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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