

“Going Global” of Chinese Local Dietary Culture: A Case Study of Traditional Special Snacks Translation

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Abstract. To help Chinese local dietary culture “going global”, this paper makes a case study on the spread of Ningde’s traditional special snacks from the perspective of translation. It discusses two translation strategies, namely liberal translation plus photos, combined introduction and annotation, which aims to spread the following dietary culture: keep the history in mind, long for a better life and lay emphasis on keeping healthy. With the translation of traditional special snacks, the local dietary culture is introduced to the world as well as sharing reference for spreading more local dietary culture.

Keywords: Dietary Culture, Traditional Special Snacks, Translation.

1. Introduction

Under the background of globalization, the communication and integration of various cultural systems have become the most significant phenomenon. In the process of communication and cooperation with different countries, language and culture play important roles. Due to the rapid development, the international world puts attention and research on China’s cultural heritage. At the beginning of the 21st century, China put forward the “going global” of Chinese culture initiative as a cultural advancement policy, and actively participates in the development trend of world culture.

In Chinese culture, there is an important proverb “Food is the most important thing for the people”, showing that Chinese people consider food as the greatest importance for their life. “Food, the cornerstone of life, lies at the heart of our cultural identity” [1]. It indicates that food makes a significant influence on people’s life and represents the most important part of cultural identity. For cultural exchange, the spread of dietary culture must be a welcomed and efficient way to help people communicate. According to different languages and cultures, translation is the first step, so that people all around the world can get the chance to know, like and experience that country’s dietary culture.

In the English version book of *Chinese Foods*, many aspects of local dietary culture have been illustrated in English. Though rich dietary culture is concerned, it’s still hard to fully show all of it with a long history. “Local special snacks like a unique landscape of local dietary culture, attracting all tourists know more about the local culture and experience the local people’s life” [2]. Traditional special snacks can highlight the most characteristic part of the dietary culture. With the traditional and special characteristics, traditional special snacks provide excellent attraction and attention, and the translation plays an important role to make the dietary culture “going global”.

In order to follow the country’s “going global” of Chinese culture initiative and make a contribution to promote the cultural exchange among people in different places, and try to show the world with the country’s special attractiveness, this research discusses the spread of Chinese local dietary culture by the translation of traditional special snacks in Ningde, which is a fast emerging and thriving coastal city in the northeast of the Western Taiwan Strait Economic Development Zone. It received a reputation of “National Garden City”. Chinese president Xi Jinping was in charge of it for two years. Now Ningde is growing famous for its tea, new energy automobiles and its garden-style environment, etc. Ningde has its own special, delicious and healthy traditional special snacks, which make people’s life filled with happiness, satisfaction and love. Ningde’s traditional special snacks can become a representative to show Chinese local dietary culture. This research selects typical traditional special snacks as translation examples to show Ningde’s dietary culture, so as to reflect

the spread of Chinese local dietary culture and make a reference for the translation of other local places' traditional special snacks as well as the spread of different local dietary culture.

2. Literature review

CNKI, a Chinese database entry system, also a large digital library, collects a variety of academic journal articles. It's the most authoritative academic literature search website in China. When the theme of "Chinese dietary culture" is typed on the page of CNKI, a great number of 1,455 academic journal articles are related. It can be seen a fruitful research on the Chinese dietary culture. Many scholars in China have already made contribution to study and spread Chinese dietary culture. But only 24 foreign academic journal articles take the Chinese dietary culture as the main theme in CNKI. So, in accordance with China's long history of culture, there are not many researches on the Chinese dietary culture. With the theme "local dietary culture" searched, 96 and 11 academic journal articles are shown in Chinese and English respectively. In a large land of China, fewer researches are related to local dietary culture. To search the theme of "spread of dietary culture", 188 academic journal articles are related. From the number of these researches, it arouses an awareness to make researches for spreading Chinese dietary culture. China carries out the initiative of making its culture "going global". But not many researches take a consideration on this point. It can tell that it still has a long way to follow and realize the goal of making the culture "going global" and make more researches in this aspect. By searching the theme of "translation of special snacks", 41 academic journal articles are included. But with the theme of "translation of traditional special snacks", only two articles included, one is academic journal articles, another one is a student's graduation paper.

In the discussion of translation and dietary culture, Chinese scholars introduce different kinds of dietary culture and analyze the translation of the cuisine's names under the guidance of different theories. For instance, the Communicative Translation Theory is used to remind translators to pay more attention to international events and make good use of the opportunity to discuss the translation of Halal food culture and spread Chinese halal culture (Zhang Jinnan, 2019). Under the guidance of Skopos Theory, the connotation of Shaanxi characteristic dietary culture is analyzed as well as the translation techniques of Shaanxi characteristic dietary names (Liu Hui & Han Tingting, 2020). In the guidance of the Theory of Ecological Translation, the related translation is discussed, including the standard translation name of the cuisine in China's Anhui province (Xie Yuanyuan, Wang Dan & Feng Xiaoying, 2019), the translation of characteristic words in Shanbei dietary culture (Chu Zhongsheng & Li Xiaofang, 2020), the translation of loaded words in the dietary culture (Jiang Xiaoping & Luo Yun, 2020) and translation strategies for the description of the dietary culture (Huang, 2019). With the guidance of Multiple-Adaptation and Adaptive Selection Theory, the way to find the best translation is discussed to help improve the effective spread of Chinese dietary culture (Dou Lu, 2018). From the perspective of Geographical Environment Determinism, it is found that there are significant differences in dietary culture between latitude and different regions at the same latitude (Pu & Tang, 2020). Under the guidance of Relevance-Adaptation Theory, the translation of featured delicious food is discussed (Cao Panpan, 2015). With the guidance of Relevance Translation Theory, the translation of Chinese local snack names is analyzed (Cao Panpan, 2014). Guided by Functionalism Theory, the translation of traditional Quanzhou cuisine is discussed (Zhuang Fan, 2013). By having the commonly used theory, the translation of food, snacks and culture is studied. From the point of translation strategies, Zhangzhou special snacks translation is discussed in accordance with the relevance-adaptation translation model, so as to maintain certain Zhangzhou characteristics in the promotion of South Fujian's traditional culture (Lin Ruiyun, 2018). On the basis of cultural confidence and respect for differences, the translation strategies of dietary culture are analyzed from the perspective of cultural communication (Liang Qi, 2020). Chinese special snacks translation is analyzed to effectively spread the culture and its connotation (Yang Liuchuan, 2012). Local special snacks translation strategies are analyzed to improve the text for tourism (An Dengxian, 2018). The translation strategies of Sichuan ethnic region's snacks are discussed from the perspective

of reception aesthetics, aiming at giving a consideration to the readers' cultural psychology and arousing the readers' interest as well as maintaining the snacks' ethnic flavor (Yuan, 2014). And the translation of the names and description of Chinese food is analyzed in the light of reception aesthetics (Gan Qiao, 2018).

Different places have different dietary cultures. The researches of dietary culture in different areas of countries are shown to the world. The formation of traditional dietary culture in Southeast Asia is analyzed (James M. Hastings, 2005). The sacrificial rites foods are introduced to show the dietary culture in Korea (Yoon Suk Kyung & Park Mi Nam, 1999). The management of traditional food and eating behavior is mentioned to point out the unique tradition of preserving the Chosun tribe's dietary culture in Yenbeun (Jang JeongOck, 1993). The characteristics of the dietary culture in the Nara Dynasty in Japan are discussed (Lee Hyo Gee, 1997). By the analysis of the religious rites and traditional customs, the buddhist dietary culture in East Asia is introduced (Kim Chon Ho, 1996). For the purpose of exportation, the dietary culture and cuisine of North Korea is introduced (Lim Tai Wei, 2020). The relationship between cuisine, culture and tourism is analyzed to contribute to culinary tourism in India (K Damodaran, 2018).

As an important part of people's life, the research of dietary culture can never be stopped, and any perspective can be explored to make further researches of the dietary culture. In any place, the food is different, as is the dietary culture. For instance, in Fujian Province of China, each city has its own dietary and culture. Scholars have mentioned the local dietary culture and special snacks in the southern areas like Quanzhou and Zhangzhou Cities. So, it leaves a vacancy for discussing the dietary culture in other local places of different areas. In this case, Chinese local dietary culture is advocated to pay attention to, so that its traditional special snacks can be a specific element to be analyzed.

3. Roles of traditional special snacks in dietary culture

3.1 On behalf of the local

Food is important for one's life. People cannot live without it. Special snacks are the essence of local food and the carrier in the folk culture. Special snacks especially belong to a local place and represent one place's local food, as well as the local dietary culture. For instance, Ningde boasts plentiful snacks. The snacks available around the year are: meat balls, beef noodles, taro noodles, sour vegetable noodles, meat and vegetable noodles, wonton, grilled meatballs, grilled oyster balls, beef balls, puree, fish balls, noodles with pig intestines, south China balls, dumplings in reed leaves (the She ethnic food) [3]. These snacks can make other people know what the local people of Ningde like to eat in their daily life. The features of the snacks represent Ningde people's dietary habits and the local dietary culture indicated. When those special snacks are mentioned and talked about, Ningde could be the place where people connect those special snacks with the place they belong. The introduction to special snacks can further make a local place known to others as well as its dietary culture. Traditional special snacks have a long history with specific features, which can be more representative for a local place. Traditional special snacks can also make a place especially different and local. To mention a local place and its dietary culture, traditional special snacks can be on behalf.

3.2 Highlight the uniqueness

In the dietary culture, special snacks are one part of dietary culture, all kinds of snacks can represent the refinement of people's cultural life, as well as reflect local people's material culture and social life style. Traditional special snacks are the long history type of snacks, which highlight the most characteristic part of the dietary culture, including the traditional dietary habits as well as the cultural connotation and values. Chinese local dietary culture is unique and rich, representing the local characteristics of China.

Eating is a daily routine for all people. Special snacks are the unique eating food, showing which food people consider to be one part of their dietary habit. When the local people enjoy the special snacks in life, special snacks become unique and necessary. In the dietary history, traditional special

snacks exist for a long time in people's daily life, showing the importance and uniqueness of traditional special snacks in people's dietary life. Traditional special snacks not only indicate the local people's dietary tradition, but also highlight the traditional dietary habits, cultural connotation and values of the local people's life.

With the uniqueness of traditional special snacks, the local dietary culture becomes more attractive. Traditional special snacks can keep a long history and still become necessary in people's daily life, the uniqueness of flavor and dietary culture can count for the reason. In some places, foreign teachers are at a shortage for the school's foreign language teaching. According to the unique attraction, traditional special snacks can play a role in making foreign people get interest and like the local place, so as to come and stay. Traditional special snacks are not only good for the tourist economy, but also good for attracting foreign teachers and providing opportunities for the local place's foreign language teaching and international communication.

4. Spread local dietary culture by translating traditional special snacks

In China, the "going global" of Chinese culture is advocated in a state's point of view. As a key element of Chinese culture, the spread of dietary culture is worth to be introduced to the world. In Fujian Province of China, the Department of Commerce showed active measures to encourage the promotion and recommendation of local special snacks in 2018 and 2019 for two consecutive years. If not impeded by COVID-19, the activities to promote and recommend Fujian's local special snacks will be held continuously. In Fujian, the tasty and abundant snacks not only receive a good reputation, but also have characteristics in each local place. It has nine cities with prefecture level, and Ningde City is one of them. Except the reputation of "National Garden City", it has a marine, subtropical and monsoonal climate. The great environment and climate produce abundant food in Ningde. And the people's life style and values make it have its own dietary culture, namely keep the history in mind, lay emphasis on keeping healthy and long for a better life. Take Ningde's traditional special snacks translation as a case study can not only improve Ningde's popularity and attraction by sharing the great dietary culture, but also help Ningde's culture "going global" as well as show two effective translation strategies to help spread Chinese local dietary culture.

4.1 Liberal translation plus photos

As the traditional special snacks have profound history and unique features, it's hard to make equivalent translation. For instance, "guang bing" is a kind of dough cake, which relates to a historical figure Qi Jiguang. The local people keep making "guang bing" and made this name especially for expressing the gratitude for Qi Jiguang's contribution and remembering the history of the ancient time. The name of the traditional special snack "guang bing" implies Ningde's dietary culture of cherishing the current life towards keeping the history in mind. Though the traditional special snacks are different in each local place, the dietary culture can be the same. The translation of "guang bing" is an example to show the way to spread the same aspect of dietary culture. If the translation was only shown as "guang bing", foreign people would have no idea about what the traditional special snack refers to. The name of its Chinese is simple, and directly tells the creator of it. But in the background knowledge of foreign people, more information is gone. Translation is not only about two languages, but also relate to two cultures. Therefore, the liberal translation is required to make the translation acceptable and understandable. The liberal translation of "guang bing" can be like: a kind of dough cake baked with flour, alkali flour and salt. It is a historical food. It originated from the history that Qi Jiguang made a flatbread with a hole in the middle which can be hung in the neck, so that the soldiers can have food to eat during the fight against enemies. The local people knew the history and keep making "guang bing" as well as eat it as a traditional special snack in the daily life. The liberal translation can make foreign people know about "guang bing", and the showing photos of "guang bing" will help make the liberal translation clearer and more successful in equivalence with Chinese and English.



Fig 1. Photos of “guang bing”

In people’s life, traditional special snacks are especially important and play significant roles. Some traditional special snacks become a necessity in festivals, like “chao migao”, which is popular in Ningde. It’s indispensably welcomed by the local people during the time of Chinese Spring Festival. The local people prepare it for worshipping the kitchen God as a traditional custom in the lunar year, making a hope that the whole family can be blessed with a good life. And in the coming of Spring Festival, the local people eat it and serve it to the guests, enjoying the celebration of the most important festival in China. The preparation and eating of it show the local people’s anticipation and joy of the festival. And the love of this traditional special snack indicates the local people’s celebration way towards festivals and their happiness in life. As a popular and traditional special snack, it’s a typical representative of the local dietary culture, reflecting the local people’s longing for a better life. With its sweetness, the local people feel the full of happiness. The dietary culture of “chao migao” is directly related to people’s heart towards life. The spread of its dietary culture will be significant and shows people around the world the local people’s longing for a better life, so as to share the beauty of dietary culture. In order to make the wonderful spread successful, its translation is required to be considerable. In Chinese, the making method and ingredients of “chao migao” are known by the name. But for foreign people, they cannot understand what this kind of method is, either the ingredients. It’s hard for them to get to know this traditional special snack and its great significance. If their interest on its dietary culture is affected as well as the enjoyment from its connotation, the spread of the great local dietary culture would be failed. Therefore, the translation plays an important role. “The translator should try to consider all possible relevant factors under the guidance of translation purpose, and determine the most appropriate translation strategy” [4]. In order to make “chao migao” and its dietary culture successfully known by the foreign people, liberal translation plus photos is effective to tell its name, making method and ingredients, as well as the dietary culture. With the liberal translation, “chao migao” refers to a type of sweet festival snacks, which is also a popular traditional special snack profoundly loved by the local people. It uses the ingredients of rice, sugar, peanut or sesame, and the rice is stir-fried or deeply fried. In the enjoyment of its sweetness and festival happiness, the local people express the longing for a better life. By adding the photos to the liberal translation, foreign people can directly see and feel “chao migao” and its dietary culture.



Fig 2. Photos of “chao migao”

4.2 Combined Introduction and Annotation

Traditional special snacks are not only the local food to be eaten, but also related to the local people's life in many aspects. People focus on life and health in the whole lifetime. Except the flavor and implied meaning of traditional special snacks, there's one function which makes traditional special snacks essential, that is keeping people healthy. In Ningde, among the traditional special snacks, "yuanyang mian" is a healthy local food, which is a type of unique noodles especially in China. The name of "yuanyang mian" is mostly because of its origin and basic ingredient. "yuanyang" is mandarin duck. The Mandarin Duck Stream of Ningde is a five-A national key scenic spot, it's also the only protection zone for mandarin ducks in China at present and enjoys a reputation of "homeland of mandarin ducks" [6]. In the Mandarin Duck Stream, oak trees are surrounded. Since the ancient time, the local people have made the fruits of oak tree as the food. With the local people's wisdom to improve the eating way of oak fruits, the noodle made by oak fruits is formed. In Chinese culture, the oak fruits symbolize the potential and patience. And in western culture, the oak fruits represent immortality, luck, youth and energy. Though the cultures are different, the oak fruits both have the positive symbolism. As a traditional special snack, "yuan yang mian" contains good connotation of the oak fruits in its dietary culture. Besides, it's unique for the function of keeping people healthy. By knowing its advantages on health, the local people lay emphasis on its function of keeping healthy. According to its adjuvant therapeutic effect, the local people make different cooking and eating ways to fully play its healthy benefits, including the help for high blood pressure, diabetes and haemorrhoids. The dietary culture of laying emphasis on keeping healthy can be all the people's pursuit. In order to share this dietary culture and arouse people's attention to health, the translation plays an important role to make this dietary culture spread correctly and successfully. In the cognition of foreign people, they know oak fruit and its symbolism, which helps make them understand the basic ingredient and good connotation of "yuanyang mian". With an introduction to "yuanyang mian", the foreign people can understand what this traditional special snack is. For its translation, "the translator should try to consider the foreign people's cultural background, dietary habits and the cognition differences toward local special snacks" [6]. To make the translation of "yuanyang mian" understandable by foreign people, the annotation is helpful. Therefore, the translation of "yuanyang mian" combined introduction and annotation can be like: A type of noodles only in China, named by the mandarin ducks in the only protection zone of Ningde's five-A national key scenic spot and the oak fruits made into the noodle. It's unique by the good symbolism of love and life as well as the health effects in treating high blood pressure, diabetes and haemorrhoids.

5. Conclusion

This study is an opportunity to add research on Chinese dietary culture and makes contribution to helping foreign people know more about the important essence of Chinese culture, thus make China receive more attention and help the local places "going global", showing good aspects of the dietary culture to the outside world, then help make more development in tourism, education and business, etc. For a country, to make the local dietary culture "going global" can help build a special image of the nation and show the life of its people. The benefits are also made to promote a country's attraction, acceptance and development. For the local places, the spread of the local dietary culture in the traditional special snacks can help make that place not so local but can be global with international communication and cooperation opportunities. For the foreign people, they know different dietary cultures can make them enjoy one more aspect of life and cherish what they have in life. For the local people, they will have the happiness of sharing and build up a sense of pride.

To study the way of Chinese local dietary culture's "going global", this paper makes a case study on the translation of Ningde's traditional special snacks as well as the corresponding dietary culture. Two translation strategies "liberal translation plus photos" and "combined introduction and annotation" are discussed, so as to spread the dietary culture of keeping the history in mind, longing for a better life and laying emphasis on keeping healthy. By analyzing the translation of traditional

special snacks and introducing the local dietary culture, this paper is served as a reference for making more local dietary culture “going global”.

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