

## A STUDY ON THE TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL TEXTS ON THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCE

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### ABSTRACT

The first Silk Road appeared during the Han Dynasty's (206 BCE-220 CE) westward expansion of China when trade networks were proven throughout what are now the Central Asian nations of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as modern-day India and Pakistan to the south. One of the largest infrastructure initiatives ever created is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), often known as the New Silk Road. The huge array of investment and development programs, which President Xi Jinping launched in 2013, would reach from East Asia to Europe, considerably boosting China's economic and political dominance.

This endeavor has been the subject of numerous translations and interpretations by books and experts from throughout the world, giving us useful and accurate study materials. However, it has been found that many academics and professionals prefer to conduct their research from the standpoint of analysis and cross-cultural communication and that studies on translation are therefore insufficient and shallow. The current translation study focuses on dynamic equivalence and emotional reproduction at three levels of words, phrases, and sentence structures in the Belt and Road Initiative. This thesis investigates the Belt and Road Initiative translation using the dynamic equivalence theory with the goal of preserving the text's original emotional nuance. In addition to reflecting the original author's emotional viewpoint and attitude, emotional reproduction can be an effective way to impress readers.

**Keywords:** The Belt and Road Initiative, dynamic equivalence, emotional reproduction, political text

### INTRODUCTION

China's *Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative* is a book with political tendencies, and many places in the text involve politically sensitive texts. For the translator, it is more important to deal with some emotional colors while reproducing the emotion of the source text, so as to avoid causing politically sensitive topics. Political texts are hard to translate, and they can sometimes be included in the category of untranslatable text. Politicians do not deliver their speech or text to be translated for a foreign audience. Thus, in some cases, a translator cannot produce parallel texts that are identical in meaning (Quentel 2006:3).

#### 1.1 Research Questions

Three questions are formulated to be answered in this thesis:

Q1: What is the dynamic equivalence and emotional reproduction of translation researched in this thesis? How can they be classified? What translation strategies are employed, and what are the factors?

Q2: What are the characteristics of emotional reproduction in political text translation? What types of emotional representation and relevant translation strategies are there in *China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative* political texts?

Q3: What are the factors affecting emotional reproduction in *China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative* political texts? And how can an emotionally colored translation be employed in political text translation?

## 1.2 Research Methodology and Data Collection

This thesis takes advantage of the theoretical framework of Dynamic Equivalence theory, using qualitative research in SPSER (situation, problem, solution, evaluation, and recommendation) and descriptive methods to analyze the shift of emotional colored ways during the translation of the Belt and Road in terms of three dimensions: Analysis of emotional representation in political texts from the perspective of vocabulary, Subordinate words Group perspective analysis of emotional representation in political texts and perspective of sentence structure to reveal the translation process and translation strategies showed during this process.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Jean A. Berlie is an anthropologist who has been committed to political research. His works include East Timor independence, Indonesia and ASEAN, the Chinese ten years after Macao's return, East Timor politics and elections, national construction, prospects, and so on. He has been committed to the study of anthropology and is the author of hundreds of articles and comments. He has held countless meetings and published many books. This laid the foundation for his understanding of politics. His work, *China's Globalization, and the Belt and Road Initiative* was written in English in 2020 and is an important book on political theory and globalization. The purpose of this book is to explore the dual domestic and international impact of China's rise and transformation through a series of key areas, including politics, development, and foreign policy (Jean A. Berlie, 2020), which includes the problems of infrastructure construction, transportation, energy, commerce, finance and its risks, cultural influence, globalization and so on.

## 1.3 Previous Research on the Belt and Road Initiative at Home and Abroad

The Belt and Road, and other practices in Asia, Africa, and Europe are analyzed by combining a large number of cases. The purpose is to let readers understand the international impact of China's transformation. However, this article belongs to the political text, it inevitably involves political sensitivity, so the author should try to avoid causing politically sensitive topics when dealing with the emotional aspects.

### 2.1.1 Political Text (B&R) Analysis

In political articles, translation techniques such as addition translation are often used to deal with the original text, and the information that needs to be supplemented can be clearly added. On the other hand, cultural characteristics can also be expressed by added translation techniques. For example, the "jihadist", this kind of word has changed the meaning of the word

itself in cultural communication and evolution, so it is best to reproduce the emotional expression of the original text by additional translation in the process of translation.

原文: 26 out of 66 are Muslim countries and some have serious problems with **jihadist** elements. (*China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative*. Book page 42)

机器翻译: 66个国家中有26个是穆斯林国家,有些国家与**圣战**分子有严重问题。(第42页)

译文: 66个国家中有26个是穆斯林国家,有些国家存在与“**圣战**”等恐怖主义行为等相关的严重问题。(第42页)

"jihadist" means "圣战" in the dictionary, but for Chinese and Western readers, the emotional color contained in "圣战" and "jihadist" is quite different. Western readers can be described as “谈 jihadist 色变” For them, "jihadist" stands for contemporary Islamic terrorism and large-scale attacks with heavy casualties, which contains a very strong derogatory color. However, in the Chinese cultural environment, the derogatory color contained in the word "圣战" is greatly reduced. For Chinese readers, the concept of "圣战" is relatively remote, readers lack understanding of it, and may even have positive associations because of its literal meaning. Therefore, in Chinese translation, if only translated into "圣战", it is difficult to bring the same degree of emotional effect as "jihadist" to English readers. To realize the emotional reproduction of the original text, it is added in translation and translated into terrorist acts such as "圣战" to aggravate its derogatory color.

### 2.1.2 Cross-cultural Study

According to the study research, in translation, we should consider whether there are differences in the emotional color and degree of praise and criticism between the target language and the target language culture and make proper adjustments.

### 2.2 Previous Research on Dynamic Equivalence Theory at Home and Abroad

According to Eugene Nida, *dynamic* equivalence, the term as he originally coined, is the “quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the *receptor* is essentially like that of the original receptors”. The desire is that the reader of both languages would understand the meanings of the text in a similar fashion. The principles governing a *dynamic* equivalence (D-E) translation then would be: conformance of a translation to the receptor language and culture as a whole; and the translation must be in accordance with the context of the message which involves the stylistic selection and arrangement of message constituents. From the perspective of dynamic equivalence, Eugene Nida puts forward that language has three meanings: expressive meaning, linguistic meaning, and emotional meaning, which reflects his thinking in translation (Nida, 1969). This theory holds that translation should be reader-centered. In translation, it is not necessary to translate completely according to the text content (Nida, 1969).

### 2.2.1 Previous Research on Dynamic Equivalence Theory Abroad

Emotional meaning not only stands for the original author's emotional attitude and position but can also be a good means to impress readers. According to the English linguist, G. Leech's book *Semantics*, language has seven meanings, of which "emotional meaning" is an important part (Geoffrey Leech, 1981). This thesis paper helps to analyze political texts such as the Belt and Road initiative to show readers the emotional meaning of the sentence.

### 2.2.2 Previous Research on Dynamic Equivalence Theory at Home

In using words and sentences, human beings will inevitably bring some emotional color, and this emotional color will change correspondingly on different occasions, different people, and different needs. Nothing in the world is eternal, and the emotional color of words will quietly shift with the changes of the times (He Yaye 2007:11).

## THREE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 The Development of Dynamic Equivalence Theory

Larose and Van den Broeck are of the view that equivalent response in translation is impossible. This is because the equivalence response is based on subjective judgment from the analyst and a translator. This criticism raised the question of whether Nida's theory of translation is scientific or not. Moreover, the question of whether these theories are in practice is controversial. Edwin Gentzler 1993 gives importance to its work because of its theological and persuading concept, which is changing the receptors, despite its culture. Despite the criticism of these concepts, these approaches hold a prominent standing among translation scholars.

### 3.2 The Three Dimensions of Dynamic Equivalence Theory in Terms of Emotional Color of Words

The emotional color of words can be roughly divided into three forms: commendatory, derogatory, and neutral.

#### 3.2.1 Commendatory

Commendatory words refer to the meaning of praise, affirmation, love, and respect attached to words; Derogatory words refer to words with feelings of derogation, disgust, negation, and contempt.

#### 3.2.2 Derogatory

The emotional color of words can be roughly divided into three forms: commendatory, derogatory, and neutral.

原文: The question of peace and harmony compels the USA to reconsider its ambitions in the South China Sea. (*China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative*. Book page 131)

机器翻译: 和平与和谐的问题迫使美国重新考虑其在南中国海的野心。(第 131 页)

译文：和平与和谐的问题迫使美国重新考虑其在中国南海的野心。（第 131 页）

In fact, as far as the word "ambition" is concerned, it can not only mean "野心" in a derogatory sense, but also mean "追求" as a neutral word, but also mean "雄心" in a commendatory sense.

### 3.2.3 Neutral

Neutral words specifically refer to words that cannot reflect emotional tendencies except commendatory and derogatory words. However, all things in the world cannot be expressed simply through good or harsh words and sentences.

### 3.3 The Application of Dynamic Equivalence Theory to Translation Studies

Dynamic equivalence is defined as a translation principle according to which a translator seeks to translate the meaning of the original in such a way that the target language wording did upon the source-text's audience (Nida 1964). This translation study intends to analyze *China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative* political texts according to the Eugene Nida Dynamic Equivalence theory, according to emotional meaning.

1. Analysis of emotional reproduction in political texts from the perspective of vocabulary
2. Subordinate words Group perspective analysis of emotional representation in political texts
3. Analysis of emotional reproduction in political texts from the perspective of sentence structure

This thesis tries to explore the application of emotional reproduction in the translation of political texts under the Belt and Road initiative.

## II. Dynamic Equivalence in Terms of Emotional Reproduction of Political Texts (B&R)

Zhao Guihua once mentioned that "if the social system is the same, the differences between relevant cultures are small; if the social system is different, the differences are relatively large. Therefore, translators should not ignore the social and political background of the source country, which has a profound impact on the choice of word meaning (Zhao Guihua, 2002:14).

### 4.1 Emotional Reproduction of Political Texts (B&R) from the Perspective of Vocabulary

原文：When President George W. Bush described his war on terror in moral terms of good and evil and in millennial terms of redeeming the Middle East from **captivity**, his language echoed even more widely.

(*China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative*. Book page 42)

机器翻译：当乔治·W·布什总统用道德的善与恶来描述他的反恐战争，用千禧年来拯救被囚禁的中东时，他的语言引起了更广泛的反响。（第 42 页）

译文：乔治·沃克·布什总统从道德角度解释其反恐战争惩恶扬善的初衷，并且从新千年来临之际的角度表示要将中东从阿富汗恐怖主义的阴霾中拯救出来，他的话语产生了广泛影响。（第 42 页）

The word "captivity" itself means "囚禁，囚笼". It is difficult for readers who do not understand the historical background to understand what kind of cage the Middle East is in. In George Walker at the dawn of the new millennium in 2000, President Bush ran for president and was determined to combat terrorism. At first, President Bush just launched a domestic war on terrorism, and later pointed the spearhead at all terrorist countries around the world. The "captivity" in this sentence is not only superficial imprisonment but refers to the terrorist remarks made by Afghanistan on the Middle East, which puts the people of the Middle East in a haze of terrorism. This sentence lacks the historical and cultural background of the United States launching an armed confrontation against terrorism in the Middle East.

## 4.2 Emotional Representation in Political Texts (B&R) from the Perspective of Sentence Structure

### 4.2.1 Emotional Expression of "Be" Sentence Pattern

The adjectives connected with "be" are not simply used to express emotions and attitudes. The "Be" emotional model focuses on long-term emotions, not easily disappearing emotions. Subject + copula verb + emotional adjective this is the most basic sentence structure to express emotion.

原文: The name Silk Road is ancient and continues to **be** very **attractive** with 2000 years of history. (*China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative*. Book page 25)

机器翻译: 丝绸之路这个名字由来已久, 有 2000 年的历史, 至今仍然非常吸引人。(第 25 页)

译文: "丝绸之路"这个名字由来已久, 在 2000 多年的历史发展进程中仍**极具魅力**。(第 25 页)

This sentence belongs to subject + copula verb + emotional adjective, which is the most basic sentence structure to express emotion. "Attractive" is a very emotional word, which means "极具吸引力". Here, the simplest sentence structure to express emotion is used. Although the sentence structure looks simple, the emotion expressed is very rich. It expresses the long-standing feeling that although the "Silk Road" has gone through thousands of years, its charm is still no less than the admiration of that year.

### 4.2.2 Emotional Expression of "Feel" Sentence Pattern

原文: A mighty wave of anti-China **feelings** in Vietnam and the Philippines in recent years appeared with the Belt and Road Initiative. (*China's Globalization and One Belt, One Road initiative*. Book page 134)

机器翻译: 近年来, 越南和菲律宾在中国的“一带一路”倡议中掀起了一股反华情绪。(第 134 页)

译文: 近年来, 随着“一带一路”倡议的提出, 越南和菲律宾出现了一股强烈的反华情绪。(第 134 页)

This sentence is not a very typical "feel" sentence pattern, because the original form of feel is "情绪", which is put in a feel sentence pattern as a supplementary case because feeling inspires the feelings of Vietnam and the Philippines in the original sentence. The word "feeling" clearly expresses emotion, but the specific emotion depends on the specific context. In this sentence,

one expresses the strong anti-one Chinese sentiment toward the Belt and Road by Vietnam and the Philippines, but this feeling is relatively short. "Mighty" further raised the feeling of "feeling" to a higher level, expressing the strong 21 resistance of Vietnam and the Philippines to China. Therefore, the "feelings" in this sentence cannot be translated. It is necessary to convey the emotional changes of the people in Vietnam and the Philippines to the readers. So, no matter what element "feel" plays in the original text, as long as it can stimulate the emotion of the original text, it can promote the readers to understand the information of the original text.

### 4.3 Understanding of Political Text Translation

This analysis and report writing have improved the translator's analytical skills and ability to solve problems, and deepened their understanding of emotional representation in translation. It is hoped that the study provided here which has been accumulated in the translation and problem-solving process of emotional reproduction can provide a reference for translators who translate similar texts or encounter similar problems in the future.

## CONCLUSION

The specificity of the translation of the Belt and Road texts is manifested mostly in the lexical and syntactical levels, both aim to complement the necessary information in the target language and clarify the intention of the author. It is discovered that the translator aims to improve the specificity of the text to make the text coherent and clear to comprehend. In Further study, a translator can use inappropriate translated words or word phrases table, in order to translate appropriately.

### 5.1 Major Findings

Table 1. The list of inappropriate translated words or word phrases in the Belt and Road Initiative

	Source word (English)	Inappropriate translated word	Target translated word
1	Ambitions	追求, 雄心	野心
2	Ambitious	有雄心的	雄韬大略的
3	An anchor	桥头堡, 稳定器	压舱石
4	Be angry over	生气	动辄恼怒
5	Be interested in	感兴趣	有意
6	Be pleased to	乐意	乐意在
7	Be...attractive	有吸引力的	极具魅力
8	Captivity	囚禁, 囚笼	恐怖主义的阴霾
9	Done correctly	做得对	实施恰当
10	Fighting alongside	并肩作战	狼狈为奸
11	Jihadist	圣战	"圣战" 等恐怖主义
12	Paving the way	铺路	埋下隐患
13	Poor	贫穷	欠发达的国家
14	Resentment feelings	怨恨情绪	不满情绪
15	Resulted in	造成	导致
16	Still	还	居然仍
17	Team up with	合作	相互勾结
18	Unfortunately	不幸地	遗憾的是
19	Worried about	担忧	担心

Table 1 proves the list of inappropriate translated words or word phrases in the Belt and Road Initiative. Column divided into three parts, on E-C translation in political texts. The first column showed source words from *China's Globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative* (Jean A. Berlie, 2020). The second column showed inappropriate translated words often uses in machine translation. The last column illustrated the target translated word, which was juxtaposed according to dynamic equivalence, in terms of emotional reproduction.

## 5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

It is hoped that the study provided here which has been accumulated in the translation and problem-solving process of emotional reproduction can provide a reference for translators who translate similar texts or encounter similar problems in the future. The political sensitivity in political texts needs to be grasped by translators, that is, to deal with the emotional color of words, phrases, or sentence patterns in the original text so as to avoid causing politically sensitive topics. For example, the translator reveals China's image as a participant and contributor during the reproduction of the Belt and Road.

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