**Thick Translation Strategies in the English Rendering of the White Paper *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution***

Abstract: This paper investigates the application of thick translation theory to the Chinese white paper Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution with the focus of the translation of acronyms, rhetorical phrases, and culturally loaded terms with both historical and contemporary significance. Through a qualitative research approach of content analysis, major findings stress the importance of thick translation in conveying the underlying cultural and ideological contexts of China’s poverty alleviation policies to international readers. The thick translation theory is expected to address the problem caused by the differences between the source language and the target language and promote cultural understanding. The paper concludes that thick translation is an effective approach for telling China’s poverty alleviation stories to global readers, thus improving the overall quality of translation in official documents and promoting China’s contributions to international poverty reduction efforts.

Key Words: thick translation; the white paper; Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution

1. **Introduction**

The United Nations, the most universal, authoritative, and representative intergovernmental organization, has dedicated itself to advancing the global poverty reduction cause since its establishment. In 2000, the United Nations introduced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with Goal 1 being “to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger”.1 In 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), among which Goal 1 explicitly aims to reduce global poverty by half by 2030.

China has actively responded to the United Nations’ call for poverty reduction. As the world’s largest developing country, China achieved comprehensive poverty eradication by 2020 through targeted poverty alleviation, successfully lifting approximately 800 million people out of poverty, thus meeting the poverty reduction target of the United Nations 2030 Agenda a decade ahead of schedule.2

The international community generally regards China’s targeted poverty alleviation policy as efficient and focused. According to the Millennium Development Goals Report released by the United Nations, China’s remarkable progress in poverty alleviation contributed significantly to the decline of the extreme poverty rate in East Asia—from 61% in 1990 to 4% in 2015. China’s poverty reduction experience has provided valuable lessons for other developing countries and has contributed to the progress of global poverty reduction efforts.

However, the announcement of China’s eradication of absolute poverty has also raised doubts in the international community. Some Western media were skeptical about the Chinese government's efforts and whether China had met its poverty alleviation targets as planned.3

In this context, China issued the white paper *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution.* The white paper highlights China’s success in eradicating absolute poverty under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, offering a comprehensive summary of the country’s poverty alleviation efforts. As an official, authoritative document, it provides valuable insights into China’s poverty alleviation strategy, addresses misunderstandings about China’s poverty reduction model and effectiveness, and serves as a model for global poverty reduction. Therefore, the white paper shapes the image of China as a responsible country.

The concept of thick translation was introduced by Kwame Anthony Appiah, a professor of philosophy at Princeton University, in 1993 when discussing the translation of African proverbs.4 It refers to placing a text within a rich cultural and linguistic context through annotations and accompanying notes. Initially, it had a profound impact on Western translation studies. When it was introduced into China, the academic community proposed four different versions of the term “深度翻译”“厚翻译” “厚重翻译” “丰厚翻译”.5

Thick translation is commonly applied in fields such as medical translation, classical text translation, and literary translation, but it has few applications in political or economic texts, especially official documents like white papers. Because Chinese texts for international communication contain a large number of terms with distinct Chinese characteristics, simple literal translation or transliteration cannot accurately convey the original meaning. Thick translation can provide better guidance for such translations by using prefaces, footnotes, and other means. Therefore, the theory of thick translation holds promise for guiding the translation of these types of texts. Given this, this paper will select both the Chinese and English versions of the white paper *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution* as a corpus and explore the application of thick translation theory in such official poverty reduction texts. In particular, the white paper is unique for acronyms with numbers, rhetorical words and words with historical and contemporary characteristics, so the paper will focus on the translation of these words and phrases with Chinese characteristics and how the thick translation theory is applied to them. The paper is expected to guide the development of China’s poverty alleviation discourse system and contribute to the further development of thick translation theory.

1. **Literature Review**
   1. **Previous Studies on the White Paper *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution***

The white paper has attracted much attention as it is an important document or report issued by the government with a white cover. It represents the position of the government and plays an important role in international communication. By 2024, the Chinese government had issued more than 140 white papers, covering areas such as democratic political construction, rule of law construction, political party system, human rights conditions, arms control and national defense. They are translated into English, French, German, Japanese and other languages for publication by Foreign Languages Press.

The scholars from different disciplines have studied Chinese white papers from different perspectives. For example, a search of CNKI for the keyword “the white paper” and the keyword “translation” found a total of 322 articles, and 102 of them are translation practice reports. The application of functional linguistics6, eco-translatology7, and political equivalence theory8 has provided a multifaceted perspective on the subject.

The Chinese and English versions of the white paper *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution*, for example, were issued in 2021. After that, various translation theories have been employed to analyze the language, cultural and political aspects of the translation process.

Many researchers have adopted systemic functional linguistics and its related theories to analyze the white paper. Zhang Panpan (2023) employed Halliday’s metafunction theory, conducting a comparative study of the Chinese and English versions of the white paper from the perspectives of ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function9 . The findings indicated that the translation generally adheres to the material and relational processes of the original text, and the three meta-functions in the translation and the original text are basically consistent, demonstrating the applicability and feasibility of the metafunction theory in political discourse translation. Similarly, Chen Mingfang and Peng Xiaoping(2023) utilized the transitivity system in systemic functional grammar to analyze the white paper’s English translation10. They found that the text mainly consists of material and relational processes, which effectively present China's poverty alleviation experience and construct a positive Chinese image.

Some scholars have used Appraisal Theory11 to explore the white paper. Fu Jie (2023) conducted a positive discourse analysis of the English version of the white paper based on Appraisal Theory12. The research revealed that all three sub-categories of appraisal resources, namely attitude resources, engagement resources and graduation resources, exist in the white paper. The use of these resources constructs positive discourse meanings, showcasing China’s determination and ability in poverty alleviation and its positive contribution to the international community.

Newmark's translation theory13 has also been applied to the study of the white paper. Chen Shijie (2023) carried out a Chinese-Thai translation practice of the white paper under the guidance of Newmark’s translation theory14. The study explored the applicability of semantic translation, communicative translation, and relational translation strategies from the lexical, sentence, and discourse levels, aiming to provide new ideas for white paper translation.

In addition to the above-mentioned theories, the scholars have also used other theories to research the white paper. For example, Xue Min (2023) analyzed the metaphor translation in the white paper from the perspective of political equivalence, focusing on how to achieve political equivalence in metaphor translation to better convey the original meaning and maintain the political connotations15. Li Huimin (2023) explored the English translation of the white paper from the perspective of eco-translation theory, emphasizing the importance of adapting to the ecological environment of the target language in the translation process16.

Overall, the scholars have applied various translation theories to comprehensively analyze the translation of Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution. These studies have provided valuable insights into the translation process, enhancing the quality of the translation. However, there is still no application of the thick translation theory in the text. Going forward, future studies should seek for more translation strategies to better share China’s poverty alleviation experience in the global stage and promote international understanding of China’s achievements in poverty reduction.

* 1. **Previous Studies on Thick Translation**  
     Thick translation, introduced by American scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah (1993), advocates placing original texts within rich cultural and linguistic contexts through annotations and other notes, promoting the readers’ understanding and respect for the source culture. Since its introduction, this concept has attracted significant attention in the translation studies community internationally, with its application and development in various fields of translation practice.

The study of thick translation abroad is closely linked to the development of disciplines such as cultural anthropology. In the late 20th century, anthropological research provided new perspectives for translation studies, with Clifford Geertz’s theory of thick description having a profound influence.17 Drawing inspiration from this, Appiah introduced the concept of thick translation in 1993. At that time, translation studies were undergoing a “cultural turn” as postcolonial cultural studies emerged. This shift incorporated factors such as power politics and ideology into translation research. Appiah, who grew up in a cross-cultural environment and possessed a rich academic background, proposed thick translation as a response to Western cultural supremacy and racism. He argued that, in translation, one should borrow theories from interpretive anthropology and employ methods like annotations and footnotes to reconstruct the historical context of the source text, helping the target readers to gain a deeper understanding of the source culture and highlighting the authenticity and legitimacy of marginalized cultures. This would allow these cultures to have their voices heard.

Theo Hermans, in his work Thick Translation as Cross-Cultural Study, pointed out that thick translation reflects the epistemological complexity of cross-cultural translation studies and its political implications, which lead to dual interference18. On one hand, it prompts the exploration of foreign terms and concepts through unfamiliar methods and vocabularies. On the other hand, it forces the translator to move away from familiar vocabulary, navigating between the commonalities and differences of diverse cultures. Therefore, thick translation, at least, serves as a critique of the prevailing trends in translation studies at the time. He further argued that thick translation, as a tool in cross-cultural translation research, holds the potential to counterbalance the dryness of terminology and formulaic reduction in translation studies, encouraging the creation of a more diverse and vibrant vocabulary.

Scholars such as Shuttleworth and Cowie also recognize the value of thick translation, pointing out that it expands readers’ background knowledge through thick translation19. In this way, it can help the targeted readers better respect the source culture and appreciate expressions from different cultural backgrounds.

In practical applications, thick translation has been applied in the translation of texts such as African proverbs. By adding annotations, the readers can better understand the cultural context of texts with foreign cultural backgrounds. This provides an effective way for cross-cultural communication.

In China, the theoretical research on thick translation began in the early 21st century. Some scholars first review the current research status of thick translation theory through theoretical evaluation, emphasizing the semantic transmission and the realization of language functions.. For example, in 2004, Fang Mengzhi (2004) first proposed the translation of terminology and believed that the thickening of context plays a crucial role in semantic transmission and language function implementation in translation.  
In 2010, Sun Ningning combined the theory of “thick description” in cultural anthropology and explored the relationship between translation and cultural anthropology, asserting that thick translation is essentially a form of interpretation. This further deepens the understanding of its theoretical roots20.

Since then, many scholars had continued to discuss the theoretical significance of thick translation. Zhou Lingshun and Qiang Hui (2016) , for example, pointed out that it has a layered meaning21. They advocated that thickness of texts can be classified after analysis and they also emphasized the role of translators in thick translation. Specifically, translators should possess dual attributes of scholars and translators. Li Hongxia and Zhang Zheng have also reviewed the history of the theory and analyzed its various types and trends in China, which has facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of the theory in domestic academic research22.  
In practical applications, thick translation has been used to translate Chinese classical texts, literary works and medical texts. In the translation of classical texts, the English translation of *the Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic* by Wen Shude is a typical example of thick translation.23 Jiang Chenxue’s research reveals that this translation version uses extensive footnotes, parentheses, prefaces and reference materials to provide detailed explanations. This example demonstrates the important role of thick translation theory in conveying the cultural connotations of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and promoting cross-cultural communication24. Song Xiaochun’s study of the English translation of Zhongyong (The Doctrine of the Mean) explores the tendencies of thick translation in classical works and analyzes its characteristics in cultural transmission25.In the field of literary translation, the translation of works like Ulysses demonstrates the combination of literal translation with annotations. According to Wang Zhenping and Yu Mingxing, numerous footnotes are added to keep the original cultural features and help readers to understand. It shows the value of thick translation in literary works26. Also, thick translation is widely applied in the medical translation. It is common to see that translators add annotations to explain unique TCM concepts, disease names, and treatment methods. It aims to help foreign readers understand the essence and characteristics of Chinese medicine and promote its popularization. For example, terms like “Yin-Yang” “Five Elements” and “meridian acupuncture” often occur with background knowledge and explanations.

However, there is a little application of thick translation in official texts. Han Yi, a Chinese scholar, has applied it to the study of government work reports.27 However, it has not yet been applied to texts related to poverty reduction. To address this gap, the paper selected the white paper as a corpus and analyzed the application of thick translation theory in the official discourse on poverty alleviation. It is expected to promote research on thick translation theory and the communication of China’s poverty alleviation discourse.  
In conclusion, thick translation has achieved significant academic results. International research has laid the theoretical foundation and begun practical applications. On this basis, Chinese research has deepened theoretical discussion and expanded application fields. In practice, thick translation has demonstrated its crucial value and potential in different texts. However, there is an urgent need to achieve a unified understanding of its core concepts and application standards. Future research is expected to address these issues and further promote the development of both the theory and practice of thick translation.

1. **Methodology**

The paper aims to explore the application of the thick translation theory in official texts by examining the Chinese and English corpus of the white paper entitled *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution*.

The white paper, published by the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, consists of more than 30,000 words and is divided into several sections, including the preface, main text, conclusion, and appendix. The main text is further divided into five chapters: “The Solemn Commitment of the Communist Party of China” ,“The Comprehensive Victory in the Battle against Poverty in the New Era”, “The Implementation of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Strategies” ,“Exploring New Paths for Global Poverty Reduction” and “Building a Community of Shared Future for Humankind without Poverty”.

The writer downloads the Chinese and English versions of the white paper from the official website of the State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. Then they are imported into the online alignment website Tmxmall for reference. After that, the writer checks both of the corpora for reference. After selection, the writer focuses on the translation of words and phrases with quotation marks. These expressions are typical in official texts as there are more than 100 such expressions in the original text. They may include allusions and idioms, and are the embodiment of rich cultural meanings. It is difficult to find exact English translation because these expressions are always culturally loaded terms, which means translators need to figure out the true meaning behind words and make appropriate additions to the meaning of the vocabulary after considering the reality of the target readers. This is actually consistent with the starting point of the thick translation theory.

1. **Analysis of the Translation of *Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution* from the Perspective of the Thick Translation Theory**
   1. **Translation of Acronym with Numbers**

Chinese white papers cover a wide range of topics. Abbreviations and acronyms are standard expressions in specialized areas. These terms reflect professionalism and formality and can convey rich information with the least words. Without abbreviations, the full expressions would make the text overly lengthy and cumbersome, hindering readers’ ability to quickly grasp the key points. Therefore, this conciseness of expression enhances the efficiency of information communication and it meets the need of modern fast-paced information exchange. However, for foreign readers who are not familiar with Chinese expressions, literal translation may lead to confusion and misunderstanding. When literal translation is not enough to convey the cultural connotation, the translator may depend on footnotes, endnotes, or additional explanations. In the translation of Poverty Alleviation：China’s Experience and Contribution, literal translation is often combined with annotations to clarify key terms and concepts.

Example 1, “两不愁三保障” is translated into “The Two Assurances and Three Guarantees[ This refers to assurances of adequate food and clothing, and guarantees of access to compulsory education, basic medical services and safe housing for impoverished rural residents. ]” The “Two Assurances” refer to the stable provision of adequate food and clothing for the rural poor, while the “Three Guarantees” refer to the provision of compulsory education, basic medical care, and safe housing. In this example, annotations are added to explain the term. This term was put forward by China in the process of poverty alleviation efforts. On February 25, 2021, China won the battle against poverty, and this goal mentioned has been fully realized. There are many similar examples in the white paper such as “四议两公开” “三步走” and“两个大局” .These expressions often summarize multiple aspects. Their frequent appearance on different occasions has helped them become set expressions in China. However, for target language readers, these expressions may be unfamiliar. Therefore, translators must consider the reality. A direct, literal translation might lead to confusion and hinder the communication of the cultural content. Translator should ensure that these terms are explained or clarified in a way that is accessible to the target readers, and at the same time, maintain the original meaning.

Example 2 is the term “四议两公开”(Four-Step Deliberation and Two-Level Disclosure). The "四议两公开" (“Four-Step Deliberation and Two-Level Disclosure”) system is a grassroots democratic decision-making and transparency mechanism practiced in rural China. Under this system, major village-level affairs must undergo four procedural steps and are followed by two levels of disclosure. This mechanism serves to standardize decision-making procedures, enhance transparency, and ensure villagers’ rights to be informed, to participate, and to supervise village governance. In the white paper, this system is translated as “ a "4+2" system[ "4+2" system refers to the democratic policy-making process on village affairs under the leadership of village Party organizations. "4" means four steps: Proposals should be put forward by the Party branch, jointly discussed by the village committee and the Party branch, and deliberated by Party members, and resolutions should be adopted by villagers' representatives; "2" means transparency on two levels–resolutions and implementation results should be made known to the public. ]” As a grassroots governance mechanism with distinct Chinese characteristics, the concept may lose its political significance and innovative institutional implications if the original term is omitted and only an English paraphrase is used. It is translated into a simplified term followed by explanatory content. Firstly, “4+2 system”, the simplified term, can ensure efficient dissemination of the concept. It allows for consistent and repeated reference throughout the text, enhancing terminological coherence and communicative efficiency. Secondly, the accompanying explanation reflects the strategy of thick translation. By preserving the original expression and providing annotations and contextual background, this approach bridges cultural gaps and enhances the accuracy of the translation.

Example 3 is “‘五保’制度”. It employs the same strategy. It is translated into “Five Guarantees.[ The National Agricultural Development Program (1956-1967) specified that agricultural cooperatives should give proper care to commune members who could not work and had no family to support them, by providing them with proper food, clothing, fuel, and education (for children and teenagers), and by paying their burial expenses. ]” This term refers to a policy that ensures basic care and provisions for individuals who are unable to work or have no family to support them. To understand the term, it is critical to understand the social security system in China. Since the literal translation is not enough to express the deep meaning, the translator uses annotation. This explanation gives the readers historical and contextual background about the policy’s origins and scope. Therefore, the foreign audience can grasp its importance and the societal context in which it was implemented.

Example 4 is the term “两个大局”. It is translated into “Two Development Strategies.[ In 1988, Deng Xiaoping proposed that ‘The coastal areas, which comprise a vast region with a population of 200 million, should accelerate their opening to the outside world, and we should help them develop rapidly first; afterwards they can promote the development of the interior. The development of the coastal areas is of overriding importance, and the interior provinces should subordinate themselves to it. When the coastal areas have developed to a certain extent, they will be required to give more help to the interior. Then, the development of the interior provinces will be of overriding importance, and the coastal areas will in turn have to subordinate themselves to it.’ (Source: ‘The Central Leadership Must Have Authority’, Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol III.) ]”. This concept, proposed by Deng Xiaoping in 1988, emphasized the prioritization of development in coastal areas over interior regions. A literal translation alone might leave foreign readers unaware of the broader political and strategic context behind this policy. To address this, the translation includes a detailed annotation: “In 1988, Deng Xiaoping proposed that ‘The coastal areas, which comprise a vast region with a population of 200 million, should accelerate their opening to the outside world, and we should help them develop rapidly first; afterwards they can promote the development of the interior. The development of the coastal areas is of overriding importance, and the interior provinces should subordinate themselves to it. When the coastal areas have developed to a certain extent, they will be required to give more help to the interior. Then, the development of the interior provinces will be of overriding importance, and the coastal areas will in turn have to subordinate themselves to it.’ (Source: ‘The Central Leadership Must Have Authority’, Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol III.)”. This citation, sourced from Deng Xiaoping's Selected Works, provides foreign readers with deeper insight into the origins and implications of the policy, offering a more comprehensive understanding of China's developmental priorities at the time.

The combination of literal translation and annotation is a typical application of **thick translation** theory. This approach not only conveys the original text’s language but also provides the necessary cultural, historical, and political contexts for the target audience. According to **thick translation theory**, translation is not merely about language conversion. It also includes providing the reader with a deep understanding of the source culture and context. For example, annotations, footnotes, and other explanatory elements serve as tools for “thickening” the text.

In conclusion, the strategy is highly effective for translating complex, culturally specific terms found in Chinese white papers. By following thick translation principles, the translators can ensure that the full meaning, context, and cultural significance of the original texts are conveyed to the target audience.

**4.2 Translation of Rhetorical Phrases**

The white paper uses various rhetorical devices. In analyzing the use of rhetorical devices in the white paper, it is evident that the language not only serves as a communicative tool but also reflects China’s efforts to express China’s unique approach to poverty alleviation. When thick translation is applied to translate these rhetorical devices, it offers a method of conveying both the linguistic and cultural meaning of the original text. **Thick translation** emphasizes not only the linguistic accuracy of the source text but also the inclusion of cultural, historical, and contextual explanations. This approach is particularly important when translating key terms, phrases and rhetorical strategies that have specific cultural or political connotations.

Example 1 is the sentence: “扶贫路径由‘大水漫灌’转为‘精准滴灌’”. The sentence is translated into “The approach has changed from generalized broad-brush policies to targeted measures based on specific conditions”. “大水漫灌”（flood irrigation） refers to a large-scale and extensive irrigation method characterized by high water volume but low efficiency. In contrast, “精准滴灌”（targeted drip irrigation） denotes a small-scale, precisely controlled approach that uses less water but is more effective and focused. In fact, there are two metaphors in this example, but the English version omits references to water irrigation or the figurative imagery. The former metaphor in the original text is used to describe broad policy approaches that apply to large populations without considering individual conditions. This metaphor embodies the earlier, less focused approach to poverty alleviation in China. Applying large-scale, undifferentiated measures across the entire country is inappropriate. The latter is used to describe more specific policy approaches. The translation captures the shift from this broad approach to a more tailored and specific strategy.

In this example, this translation strategy conveys the intention of highlighting the progression in policy. The use of “generalized” and “broad-brush” conveys the original sense of an indiscriminate, one-size-fits-all approach. In contrast, “targeted measures” underscores the strategic shift to a more effective, data-driven, and locally adapted approach. This transition in the policy framework reflects China’s evolving understanding of poverty and its commitment to more sustainable and precise interventions.

In keeping with thick translation, this shift in language requires explanation for foreign readers who may not be familiar with the intricacies of Chinese poverty alleviation policies. The term “flood irrigation” in the original Chinese implies a careless, wasteful method that is no longer viewed as adequate. Translating it as “generalized broad-brush policies” while adding the context of “specific conditions” helps convey the progression of Chinese thinking on the matter.

**4.3 Translation of Words with Historical and Contemporary Characteristics**

The white paper on China’s poverty alleviation campaign reflects both historical and contemporary characteristics. It stresses China’s evolving approach to social and economic development, focuses on China’s strategies and successes in poverty reduction and emphasizes the use of special vocabulary that shows the country’s development philosophy and cultural heritage. This vocabulary links the past with the present and connects China’s traditional values with its modern aspirations.

Among the contemporary terms, “精准识别” (targeted identification) and “精准扶贫” (targeted poverty alleviation) are central to understanding the country’s poverty alleviation strategy. These terms highlight the precision and scientific approach of China’s modern poverty alleviation efforts. The use of “精准” reflects the goal of targeted interventions. This approach contrasts with earlier generalized methods of poverty alleviation, demonstrating China’s tendency towards efficiency and tailored support.

The integration of big data and information technology is crucial to this precise approach. The development of a national poverty alleviation database allows the government to assess poverty levels. This real-time data collection enables authorities to implement very effective and targeted assistance. This ensures that resources are accessible to the most vulnerable populations with maximum impact. The concepts of “五位一体” (five-sphere integrated plan) and “四个全面” (four-pronged comprehensive strategy) underscore the systematic nature of China's development pla**ns**. The Five-sphere Integrated Plan is a core concept in the overall layout of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It refers to coordinated and comprehensive development in five key areas: economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological progress. The “Four-pronged Comprehensive Strategy” encompasses four key strategic goals: comprehensively building a modern socialist country, deepening reform, promoting law-based governance, and enforcing strict self-governance of the Communist Party of China. It illustrates the CPC’s holistic and systematic planning for national governance. These strategic frameworks encompass economic growth and development in political, social, cultural, and ecological spheres. They reflect a more holistic view of development.

In addition to contemporary terms, the white paper also uses historical vocabulary to reinforce the cultural and ideological bases of China’s development strategies. “饱经苦难”（To have endured immense suffering） refers to having endured prolonged and various forms of hardship and suffering.“不屈不挠” （Unyielding and indomitable）means remaining unyielding and determined in the face of difficulties or pressure, demonstrating strong will and tenacious perseverance. These expressions show China’s hard history and Chinese people’s resilience. These terms are significant as they connect China’s modern development efforts to its past struggles, emphasizing the country’s continuity in the pursuit of social justice and prosperity.

In the white paper, the phrase “耕者有其田” which originates from China’s agrarian reform movements, reflects a deep cultural awareness of the historical roots of poverty. It refers to the principle that farmers who cultivate the land should be entitled to own the land they farm. It reinforces the idea that the struggle for land rights and basic economic security has been a key aspect of China’s path to modernization. Similarly, the idiom “愚公移山”(Yugong Removes the Mountains) is used in the white paper. It is an idiom that represents the spirit of perseverance and determination in the face of hardship, drawn from a fable in which an old man’s unrelenting efforts moved the gods to help remove mountains blocking his path. It symbolizes perseverance and determination shown in the context of poverty alleviation. This represents the spirit of Chinese people in overcoming difficulties such as poor infrastructure in remote regions.

When translating terms such as “‘三步走’发展战略” (three-step development strategic plan), a combination of literal translation and annotation is used to effectively convey both the literal meaning and the historical context. This approach is consistent with the principles of **thick translation**. “‘三步走’发展战略” is translated into “a three-step strategic plan[ The 13th CPC National Congress proposed that a three-step strategic plan for China's economic development would be laid out after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee: doubling the 1980 GNP by the end of the 1980s and ensuring that the people would have adequate food and clothing as the first step; doubling the 1990 GNP by the end of the 20th century and ensuring the people a moderately prosperous life as the second step; and increasing the per capita GNP level to that of moderately developed countries, ensuring the people a relatively affluent life, and realizing basic modernization by the middle of the 21st century as the third step. ]”. The translator conveys the connotation of the term by explicitly explaining the three steps in parentheses. Similarly, “新的‘三步走’发展战略” is translated as “a three-step development strategic plan[ The 15th CPC National Congress held in 1997 drew up a new three-step strategic plan. The first step involved doubling the 2000 GNP, giving the people greater prosperity, and putting in place a relatively complete socialist market economy system, all by the end of 2010. The second step involved working hard for another decade to further develop the economy by the centenary of the CPC, and to improve all relevant systems. The third step involved realizing basic modernization and developing China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, and culturally advanced by the time we celebrate the centenary of the PRC in the middle of the 21st century.” The translator must provide context about the specific historical period when this strategy was introduced, its goals, and the impact it had on China’s development trajectory. This approach helps international readers understand the technical meaning of these terms and broader socio-political implications.**The application of the thick translation theory** here allows the translator to provide more detailed understanding of the terms. The translator gives more details about the political leadership, the historical period and the goals. It is easier for the foreign reader to grasp the significance of these strategies within China’s development narrative.

The adoption of thick translation is particularly significant in illustrating China's adaptability and forward-looking mindset. As China moves towards a new stage of development, it constantly adapts its strategies to new challenges and opportunities. China’s emphasis on big data, information system and other technical innovation in poverty alleviation demonstrates the nation’s commitment to combining its historical cultural strengths with advanced modern practices.

**4. Conclusion**

This study explores the application of thick translation theory in the translation of the white paper Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution, with a focus on enhancing the translation process and promoting intercultural communication. The findings highlight the benefits and challenges of applying thick translation theory to the translation of official documents.

One of the key findings of this study is that thick translation theory is an effective approach for translating official documents such as white papers. Such texts often contain specialized language and culturally loaded expression. By using annotations, footnotes and supplementary explanations, the translators can provide a richer cultural and linguistic context to enhance the readers' understanding. Offering additional information and context enables readers who may be unfamiliar with the cultural and historical background to grasp the key points. Furthermore, the use of annotations in thick translation allows the translator to bridge the gap between the source and target cultures. This approach enhances the clarity of the translation and helps avoid misinterpretations, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues such as poverty alleviation.

Another significant finding is the challenge of translating specialized terms that are deeply embedded in the cultural and historical context of China. These include acronyms, numerical expressions, rhetorical phrases, and terms with historical or contemporary significance. The translation of such specialized terms also highlighted the importance of balancing accuracy and readability. While it is crucial to preserve the original meaning of the terms, it is equally important to ensure that the translation is understandable. Thick translation, with its focus on providing additional context and explanation, proves to be an effective method for achieving this balance.

By preserving the cultural and historical context, thick translation ensures that the translation does not lose its meaning or significance. This is particularly important in official documents because these texts often serve as a reflection of a country’s political ideology, national values and developmental priorities.

In the case of the white paper, the application of thick translation allowed international readers to better understand China’s unique approach to poverty alleviation. The annotations provided valuable insights into the Chinese government’s policies and strategies, as well as the country’s socio-economic realities. This helped bridge the gap between different cultural perspectives, enabling readers from diverse backgrounds to appreciate China’s efforts in tackling poverty and promoting sustainable development.

Furthermore, thick translation contributes to a more balanced and informed global dialogue on issues such as poverty alleviation by offering a deeper understanding of the socio-political dynamics. This is particularly important in the context of China’s role in global development, as the country’s approach to poverty reduction has implications not only for domestic policy but also for international cooperation and development efforts.

While the study highlights the strengths of thick translation, it is important to acknowledge several limitations. This study focused exclusively on the translation of the white paper Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution. While this text provided a robust corpus for analysis, future research could benefit from expanding the scope to include other official documents or texts related to poverty reduction. By analyzing a broader range of documents, researchers could gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in translating official texts related to global development.

Additionally, future studies could explore the application of thick translation theory to other types of official documents, such as trade agreements, diplomatic communications, or environmental policy reports. Each type of document may present different translation challenges and offer unique insights into the effectiveness of thick translation in promoting intercultural communication.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated the potential of thick translation theory to enhance the translation of official poverty alleviation texts such as the white paper Poverty Alleviation: China’s Experience and Contribution. By preserving cultural and historical contexts, translating specialized terms and promoting intercultural communication, thick translation contributes to global dialogue on poverty reduction and development. However, future research is needed to broaden the scope of study and assess reader responses to the translated texts.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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