

# A Study on Publicity Translation Strategies for Yellow River Culture on New Media from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology

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## Abstract

As one of the representatives of Chinese traditional culture, the publicity of Yellow River culture abroad helps to promote international exchanges and tell the story of the Yellow River well to the world. Guided by the theory of Eco-translatology, this study selects the bilingual articles related to Yellow River culture from the WeChat official account “wherezhengzhou”, explores the translation methods of the translations by applying the “10-tion” eco-translation methods, and puts forward optimization suggestions for the deficiencies in the translations, with a view to improving the quality of the publicity translation of Yellow River culture.

## Keywords

Eco-Translatology, “10-tion” Eco-Translation Methods, New Media, Yellow River Culture, Publicity Translation

## 1. Introduction

The Yellow River basin is the cradle of human civilization. Chinese civilization originated in the Yellow River Basin, so the Yellow River is also known as the mother river of the Chinese nation. In 2019, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed that we should deeply explore the contemporary value contained in the Yellow River culture and tell the “story of the Yellow River” well (Xi, 2019). The Yellow River culture, as one of the most splendid cultural treasures of the Chinese nation, is undoubtedly a significant carrier for international cultural dissemination. The ecological wisdom and environmental awareness embedded within it hold substantial practical significance for promoting global ecological civilization and achieving sustainable development. The international dissemination of Yel-

low River culture should also leverage new media to achieve better communication outcomes. Therefore, deepening research on translation strategies for Yellow River culture in the context of new media is particularly important for its international publicity efforts.

At present, most scholars study on the translation strategies of the Yellow River culture mainly focuses on the “multi-dimensional transformations” theory and Translation as Adaptation and Selection in Eco-translatology. Under the guidance of neo-ecologism, Professor Hu Gengshen put forward an achievement of the “practical turn” in “10-tion” Eco-translatology System, which transforms the abstract theory of Eco-translatology into a methodology for solving practical translation problems in the process of ecological translation practice (Hu, 2021).

Zhengzhou, as one of the representative cities in the Yellow River Basin, is also an important carrier of the Yellow River culture. According to research, in the past seven years, the “wherezhengzhou” official account of the Publicity Department of Zhengzhou Municipal Party Committee has published 58 articles related to “Yellow River culture”, which plays an important role in the international communication of the Yellow River culture. Based on this, this paper takes the “10-tion” translation method in eco-translatology as the theoretical guidance, selects 5 bilingual articles related to the Yellow River culture in the past three years, and analyzes 6 cases among them. It explores and analyzes the translation strategies involved in the translated texts. At the same time, based on the “10-tion” eco-translation methods, it also puts forward optimization suggestions for the deficiencies in the translation.

## 2. Brief Introductions to the “10-tion” Eco-Translation Methods

Huang Youyi emphasizes that such translation requires the translator to be proficient in and apply the “Three Closeness” principle, utilizing appropriate translation techniques and methods to suitably refine and process the text (Huang, 2004). Eco-translatology offers a fresh perspective on the international publicity translation of Yellow River culture, where the translation process can also be seen as a “text transplantation” process (Hu, 2020). According to the translation text ecosystem model, the ecosystems of the source text and the translated text are interconnected through the translator’s selective adaptation and adaptive selection during the translation process (Hu & Li, 2024). Translation activities can essentially be viewed as the translator’s selective adaptation to the translation eco-environment (Hu, 2008).

In the new era of ecological civilization, “eco-translators” engaged in eco-translation practices need to possess the “Ten Major Awarenesses”: biomimicry awareness, extension awareness, simplicity awareness, integrity awareness, naturalness awareness, vitality awareness, diversity awareness, originality awareness, contextual adaptation awareness, and comprehensive balance awareness (Hu, 2021). Building on in-depth exploration and practice, Eco-translatology has also preliminarily developed a “10-tion” methodological system for eco-translation practice

that aligns with the “Ten Major Awarenesses.” Each of them carries unique significance and functions in translation methods, collectively forming a systematic guide for eco-translation practice. The basic definitions and main features of the “10-tion” Eco-Translation Methods are briefly shown in the **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** The “10-tion” eco-translation methods (Hu, 2021).

Name	Basic Definition	Main Features
Imitationalization	Focuses on imitating the forms, patterns, colors and other concrete images of plants and animals in nature, and artistically processing specific texts for translation	Emphasizes bionics and similarity in form; Highlights the imagery of the target text
Extending-Substitution	Focuses on adaptively extending, expanding, substituting and transforming specific creatures or things in the source language ecology into the target language ecology for translation processing	Emphasizes using extension and substitution to adapt to different eco-environment
Adaptive Reduction	Focuses on simplifying the elements of the target language eco-environment, refining the essence of the text’s “vital elements”, and reducing the amount of target language words for translation	Emphasizes the translator’s adaptive choices in eco-environment where there are visual aids, common-knowledge information, excessive verbosity, etc. in the source text
Adaptive Addition	Focuses on supplementing the elements of the target language eco-environment, making up for the lack of the text’s “vital elements”, and increasing the amount of target language words for translation	Emphasizes the translator’s adaptive choices in eco-environment where there are idioms, allusions, abbreviations, information condensation, etc. in the source text
Naturalization	Focuses on preserving the natural elements, original colors, and the connotations in the source language ecology for translation	Emphasizes the elements of the original ecological environment; Highlights “inorganic nature”; Maintains the original color
Vitalization	Focuses on retaining the organic and biological nature in the source language ecology, or adaptively carrying out “anthropomorphic” processing for translation according to the target context	Emphasizes organic nature; Highlights life; Highlights biological nature
Multi-Transformation	Focuses on the translator’s multi-dimensional, multi-modal, and multi-perspective translation of texts in terms of language, culture, communication, aesthetics, communication, etc.	Emphasizes diversification, multi-dimensionality, multi-modality and multi-perspective; Highlights the translator’s selective adaptation and adaptive choices
Source-Contextualization	Focuses on adapting to the language forms, cultural connotations, and textual styles of the source language ecosystem for translation	Emphasizes the source language ecology; Pays attention to the source text; Highlights the source-language culture, etc.
Target-Contextualization	Focuses on adapting to the language forms, cultural connotations, and textual styles of the target language ecosystem for translation	Emphasizes the target language ecology; Pays attention to the target text; Highlights the target language culture, etc.
Text-Balancing Scrutinization	Focuses on, from the perspective of the “text-people-context” relationship, namely from the perspective of text, “translation community” and eco-environment, making overall planning, comprehensive observation, balance, coordination, inspection and confirmation of all links and the whole process of translation activities at the level of eco-translation concepts	Emphasizes integrity and ecological concepts; Pays attention to the comprehensive balance of ecological concept discourses; Regards it as the sum of translation activities of “eco-translators” practicing eco-translation concepts

### 3. Analysis of the Translation Strategies for International Publicity of the Yellow River Culture in New Media from the Perspective of the “10-tion” Methodology

#### 3.1. Cases of Spiritual Qualities in the Yellow River Basin

##### 【Example 1】

ST: 一条泱泱大河，一部中华春秋。

TT: The Yellow River has witnessed all of China's history.

This case employs the “Target-Contextualization” translation strategy, adapting the text to align more closely with the linguistic habits of the target language, thereby reflecting the long history of Yellow River culture. The translation utilizes the “Extending-Substitution” method from the “10-tion” of Eco-translatology, translating “春秋” as “history”. This adaptively extends the culturally specific term “春秋” from the source language ecology into a concept easily understood by target language readers, making it more compatible with the target language's cultural ecology.

In Chinese culture, “春秋” refers to the Spring and Autumn Annals, the earliest chronicle in Chinese history. Thus, in the source text ecology, “春秋” carries a deeper connotation, symbolizing the passage of time or historical changes. However, this cultural nuance does not exist in the target language ecology. Translating “春秋” as “history” ensures the complete transfer of textual meaning in cross-cultural communication.

From a linguistic perspective, Chinese is paratactic (focused on meaning cohesion), while English is hypotactic (focused on structural cohesion) (Lian, 2010). The original sentence consists of nouns and measure words but effectively conveys its message. In contrast, English typically requires a verb to form a complete sentence. Therefore, the translation adopts the “Adaptive Addition” method, adding the verb “witness” to compensate for the missing elements in the target language ecology, ensuring the accurate transmission of the original text's information.

##### 【Example 2】

ST: 黄河是中华民族的母亲河。千百年来，奔腾不息的黄河孕育了绵延不绝的华夏文明，凝聚了自强不息的民族品格，塑造了中华民族的根和魂。

TT: The Yellow River is the mother river of Chinese nation. For thousands of years, the surging Yellow River has continuously nurtured Chinese civilization, fostered the Chinese people's character of self-development, and shaped the essential quality of Chinese nation.

Revised version: The Yellow River is the mother river of Chinese nation. For thousands of years, the surging Yellow River has continuously nurtured Chinese civilization, fostered the Chinese people's character of self-development, and shaped the roots and spirit of the Chinese nation.

The translation employs the “Target-Contextualization” and “Adaptive Reduction” methods, adapting the Chinese four-character phrases to better fit the target language ecology. The phrase “绵延不绝” is translated as “continuously”, which refines and simplifies the “life elements” of the original text, accurately conveying the idea that Chinese civilization has continued uninterrupted for thousands of years. The phrase “自强不息” is translated as “self-development”, preserving to some extent the original text’s connotation of national positivity and striving for progress. The translation uses expressions in the target language that convey similar meanings, making it more accessible and understandable for English readers. Additionally, the overall sentence structure aligns with English expression habits, using a phrase like “For thousands of years, the surging Yellow River has...” which is logically clear and naturally fluent. This method transforms the original information in a way that fits the target language ecology, ensuring that the translated text conveys the intended meaning smoothly in the target language environment.

However, the phrase “the essential quality of the Chinese nation” is relatively straightforward and somewhat vague. For the deeply cultural and emotionally rich expression “中华民族的根和魂” in the original text, a more culturally resonant and vivid adaptation in the target language could enhance the translation’s appeal and impact on English-speaking readers. The translator optimized this expression by revising it to “the roots and spirit of the Chinese nation.” In English, “root” carries the meaning of “origin” or “foundation”, which aligns somewhat with the cultural connotation of “中华民族的根” in the original context. The revised translation directly conveys the two key concepts of “root” and “spirit”, highlighting their intrinsic connection to the Chinese nation. This adaptation is also more in tune with the target language ecology, making it easier for English readers to understand and resonate with.

### 3.2. Cases of Folk Culture in the Yellow River Basin

#### 【Example 3】

ST: 黄河澄泥砚，一种传统书法用具，于 2007 年入选河南省首批非物质文化遗产名录。以黄河沉积千年的泥土为原材料，经过特殊的烧制工艺制作而成的砚台，质坚耐磨，抚若童肌。一方砚台，传递了大自然的语言。  
TT: The Yellow River Chengni Inkstone, a traditional implement for calligraphy, was inscribed on the first provincial intangible cultural heritage list of Henan in 2007. Crafted from millennia-old sediment from the Yellow River through a special firing process, this inkstone, with its durable surface and delicate texture, conveys the language of nature.

The translation employs “Source-Contextualization” translation method, preserving the unique cultural elements of the original text’s ecosystem. “The Yellow River Chengni Inkstone” directly retains the name “黄河澄泥砚”, which carries a strong cultural significance in Chinese culture, thus maintaining the original flavor of the text to the greatest extent and imbuing the translation with distinct

Chinese cultural markers. Additionally, phrases such as “sediment from the Yellow River” and “a special firing process” preserve key concepts related to the production of the Yellow River Chengni Inkstone, emphasizing its unique raw materials and crafting techniques. These elements are crucial parts of the original cultural ecosystem, making it easier for target language readers to understand while also reflecting the cultural characteristics of the original text to a certain extent.

Simultaneously, the translation adopts “Adaptive Reduction” method, effectively refining and condensing the information from the original text. For the four-character expression describing the inkstone’s characteristics, “质坚耐磨，抚若童肌”，the translation “with its durable surface and delicate texture” accurately conveys the core meaning of “质坚耐磨” with the word “durable”, and succinctly summarizes the delicate texture implied by “抚若童肌” with “delicate texture.” Through concise vocabulary choices, the translation distills the key information of the original text, accurately conveying its meaning while aligning with the concise and efficient nature of new media posts. This ensures that the translation remains succinct without losing its precise grasp of the original text’s essence.

#### 【Example 4】

ST: 大河奔流，浩浩汤汤，万物竞发生长。从炎黄二帝的上古传说，到多民族统一国家的建立，黄河这条母亲河，见证了先民在此聚居，文明在此发芽。

TT: The mighty river flows majestically, fostering the growth of all life. From the ancient legends of the Yellow Emperor and Yan Emperor to the establishment of a unified multi-ethnic nation, the Yellow River, this mother river, has witnessed China’s first ancestors settling here and civilization sprouting forth.

Revised version: The Yellow River flows majestically, fostering the growth of all life. From the ancient legends of YANDI and HUANGDI (the highest rulers of tribes in Neolithic period, who are believed by Chinese like emperors) to the establishment of a unified multi-ethnic nation, the Yellow River, this mother river, has witnessed the settlement of the early Chinese and the budding of civilization.

The first sentence employs “Target-Contextualization” translation method. “The mighty river flows majestically” uses a simple subject-verb structure, making the expression natural and fluid. The phrase “fostering the growth of all life” utilizes a present participle phrase as an adverbial of accompaniment, which is also a common expression in English. Overall, the translation allows English readers to easily grasp the meaning of the original text, achieving an effective transformation into the target language’s ecosystem. However, since the “大河” in the original text actually refers to the “黄河”, the translator adapts it to “the Yellow River”, directly highlighting the characteristics of the Yellow River from the very beginning.

In the second sentence, the translation adopts the “Source-Contextualization” method, retaining culturally significant Chinese terms such as “Yellow Emperor”,

“Yan Emperor”, and “unified multi-ethnic nation.” However, the choice of vocabulary is not entirely accurate. “炎黄二帝” were leaders of ancient tribes, not “emperors” that emerged after Qin Shi Huang. In English, “emperor” typically refers to ancient monarchs. Li (2021) suggests that the translation of “炎帝” could employ a “transliteration + annotation” method, rendering it as “YANDI (the highest ruler of tribes in the Neolithic period, who is believed by Chinese like an emperor)”. This approach not only respects its original connotations and uniqueness but also conveys the core concepts of Chinese orthodox ideology and cultural traditions, highlighting the confidence of Chinese culture. Based on the translation principle of “Text-balancing Scrutinization”, the translator recommends revising it to “YANDI and HUANGDI (the highest rulers of tribes in the Neolithic period, who are believed by Chinese like emperors)”. Additionally, the expression “先民” lacks precision. The translator uses the “Adaptive Reduction” method to render “见证了先民在此聚居，文明在此发芽” as “has witnessed the settlement of the early Chinese and the budding of civilization”. This concise and clear translation aligns better with the linguistic habits of target language readers.

### 3.3. Cases of Ecological Civilization in the Yellow River Basin

#### 【Example 5】

ST: 黄河是中华民族的母亲河。千百年来，黄河浇灌出华夏五千年文明，滋养着一代又一代中华儿女。位于黄河岸边的郑州惠济区黄河滩地有机生态农业示范田，色彩间隔有层次，稻田里稻农和铁牛的雕塑，把丰收的景象衬托得无比生动.....

TT: As the mother river of the Chinese nation, the Yellow River has served Chinese people for more than five thousand years, giving birth to Chinese civilization. In Zhengzhou’s Huiji District, broad organic ecological agriculture demonstration fields have grown along the Yellow River, where a beautiful harvest image is portrayed, with farmer and iron bow sculptures standing among colorful crops.

Revised version: As the mother river of the Chinese nation, the Yellow River has served Chinese people for more than five thousand years, giving birth to Chinese civilization. In Zhengzhou’s Huiji District, broad organic ecological agriculture demonstration fields have grown along the Yellow River, where a vivid scene of bumper harvest is presented, with the sculptures of farmers and iron oxen standing among the exuberantly growing crops.

The translated text adopts the “Source-Contextualization” translation method. It retains expressions with the cultural characteristics of the original text such as “the Yellow River” and “Zhengzhou’s Huiji District”, effectively absorbing the ways of expressing these specific concepts in the foreign language. By doing so, it preserves some certain exotic elements, enabling readers to directly experience them related to Chinese culture without losing the charm of the original text due to excessive free translation.

For the element “铁牛”, which has Chinese cultural characteristics and a specific symbolic meaning in the agricultural scene, if it is mistranslated as “iron bow” (should be “iron ox”) and there is no further extended explanation of its cultural connotation in the Chinese context and its significance in the harvest scene, it is not conducive to English-speaking readers’ comprehensive understanding of the original cultural ecology. Regarding the description of the agricultural demonstration field, the expression “把丰收的景象衬托得无比生动” in the original text implies vitality and energy. However, the translated sentence “a beautiful harvest image is portrayed” only plainly states that the harvest scene is depicted, which reads a bit stiffly and fails to smoothly depict the vivid picture presented in the original text. Based on the principle of “Text-balancing Scrutinization”, the translator adopts the translation methods of “Naturalization” and “Imitationalization” to optimize the translation. The revised version is “where a vivid scene of bumper harvest is presented, with the sculptures of farmers and iron oxen standing among the exuberantly growing crops.” This not only ensures the accuracy of the content and the fluency of the language but also highlights the vitality of the organic ecological agricultural demonstration field on the Yellow River beach, and spreads the Yellow River culture from the perspective of ecological concepts.

**【Example 6】**

ST: 黄河滩地公园坚持最小干预原则, 因地制宜开展生态修复, 恢复自然生态; 启动修复十八门闸蓄滞洪区, 恢复湿地。

TT: The Yellow River Beach Park follows the principle of minimal intervention through means such as carrying out ecological restoration according to local conditions and to restore the natural ecology. The Park has started the restoration of the Shiba Menzha flood storage area as part of restoring the wetlands.

Revised version: The Yellow River Beach Park follows the principle of minimal intervention by carrying out ecological restoration according to local conditions and restoring the natural ecology. The Park has started the restoration of Shiba Menzha flood storage area (The flood storage area with 18 sluice gate) as part of restoring the wetlands.

The translated text adopts the “Source-Contextualization” translation method, retaining name expressions with the characteristics of the original text such as “Yellow River Beach Park” and “Shiba Menzha”, presenting the specific geographical and project names in their original flavor and maintaining the cultural and regional characteristics of the Chinese language. However, when disseminating relevant information overseas, for target-language readers, directly transliterating “Shiba Menzha” may lead to misunderstandings. The Shiba Menzha flood storage area in the Yellow River Beach Park is an important ecological restoration project. It is located in Huiji District, Zhengzhou City of Henan Province in China, and is named “十八门闸” because of its 18 sluice gates. Therefore, the translator uses the “Adaptive Addition” translation method and translates it into “Shiba Menzha

flood storage area (The flood storage area with 18 sluice gates).” This enables English-speaking readers who are unfamiliar with the Chinese original name or the specific situation of this area to immediately understand that the key feature of this flood storage area is the presence of 18 sluice gates, helping them to more clearly understand the basic appearance of this ecological project and China’s ecological concepts.

From the perspective of “Text-balancing Scrutinization” principle, the translation lacks refinement in the details of language expression, which hinders the effective dissemination of Yellow River culture at an ecological level. For example, in the phrase “through means such as carrying out ecological restoration according to local conditions and to restore the natural ecology”, the expression “and to restore” appears somewhat abrupt and does not align well with the preceding structure “carrying out”, failing to balance the consistency and coherence of the sentence structure. This disrupts the overall fluency and harmony of the expression. By changing “and to restore” to “and restoring,” the parallelism between “carrying out” and “restoring” is maintained, enhancing the fluency and coherence of the sentence. Additionally, some expressions in the translation could be further refined to eliminate unnecessary redundancy. The phrase “through means such as...” is kind of verbose and could be simplified to “by...,” which retains the completeness of the information while making the translation more concise and compact. This improves the naturalness and acceptability of the translation in the target language context.

#### 4. Conclusion

Currently, the practice of leveraging new media to promote the international dissemination of Yellow River stories by official institutions in China is flourishing. However, in this process, translators as representatives of the “translation community”, bear the important responsibility of upholding the principles of ecological translation (Huang & Hu, 2024). Within the complex ecosystem of translation work, translators must actively coordinate the intricate relationships within the “translation community”, guide the overall translation process and foster a harmonious and well-ordered translation environment. This ensures that translation activities align with ecological principles, facilitating accurate information transmission, effective cultural exchange, and a balanced consideration of various stakeholders’ interests.

In the practice of translating Yellow River cultural narratives for international communication through new media, “ecological translators” must develop the “ten awareness” and adhere to the principle of Text-balancing Scrutinization. Translators should flexibly choose between Source-Contextualization and Target-Contextualization strategies based on specific circumstances, ensuring that the translation both meets the informational needs of foreign audiences and highlights the unique features of Yellow River culture, allowing its distinctive charm to shine through.

At the same time, translators must enhance the vitality of the target text by skillfully applying the four key translation techniques of Imitationalization, Extending substitution, Adaptive Reduction, and Adaptive Addition. These techniques improve translation quality and effectiveness in international communication, creating high-quality adaptive texts that convey Yellow River culture to the world with accuracy, vividness, and comprehensiveness.

### Conflicts of Interest

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

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