



School of Chinese Seminar

## Quality of the English Translation of BFSU's New Motto: Preliminary Results of Linguistic Prognosis and Social Evaluation

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MAY  
2016

Friday

16:00-17:15

Run Run Shaw Tower  
Room 730  
Centennial Campus  
HKU

Language: English



The motto is a wonderful window to a university's soul and a potent marketing tool in today's globalized site of higher education. Beijing Foreign Studies University adopted a new motto in 2011 to mark the 70th anniversary of its founding and reflect the long overdue change of self-branding from paramilitary disciplinarian (團結緊張，嚴肅活潑) to cosmopolitan scholar-doer (兼容並蓄，博學篤行). Since then, a number of English translations have been proposed, including what's officialized on the university motto stone. The current study critically surveys literature on translation quality assessment (TQA), especially studies by Juliane House (2015) and Christiane Nord (1997), to generate an integrated framework combining linguistic description and questionnaire-based evaluation. Then it is applied to the official translation of the BFSU motto to see how it performs. Preliminary results reveals not only congruencies but also conflicts between linguistic prognosis and social evaluation, which underscores the complexity of translation reception especially as it intersects with issues such as ELF, world Englishes, and multiculturalism. It is hoped that this study will not only present a critique of the English translation of BFSU motto but also contribute to TQA theory in general.

**Ma Zuqiong** is Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Chinese, HKU and Assistant Professor in the School of English and International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University. Her research interests include literary translation/transmission, inter-cultural communication, and translation pedagogy. She has published journal articles in these areas and a book on female gothic elements in Eileen Chang's fiction.

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