

these texts therefore shifts from persuasion to cultural stewardship. Translators are expected to preserve key terms, provide annotation when necessary, and explain the multifaceted roles of shenrong in rituals, customs, and social relationships with cross-cultural sensitivity (Hasan, 2024; Ramadilla et al., 2024). Ethical discussions about shenrong translation that disregard these differences among text types and apply uniform standards risk impracticality and may create new misunderstandings.

Table 1 Comparison of ethical priorities across different text types in the translation of ginseng and deer antler-related content

Text type	Primary communicative purpose	Key audience	Major legal/regulatory constraints	Ethical priorities	Recommended translation strategies
Commercial advertising	Persuasion; brand positioning	Global consumers; health-product buyers	Health-claim regulations (FDA, EFSA); truth-in-advertising rules	Avoid misleading claims; ensure transparency	Moderate simplification + clear hedging terms; avoid medicalized claims
Product packaging	Product identification; mandatory information disclosure	Consumers; regulatory authorities	Labeling standards; ingredient disclosure; origin rules	Accuracy; prevent cultural misinterpretation	Standardized terminology; weakened claims; dual-track wording (function + cultural note)
E-commerce product pages	Dense information display; trust-building	Cross-border consumers; platform regulators	Platform-specific ad rules; prohibition of disease claims	Avoid misleading visuals/text; prevent over-symbolization	Segmented “function vs. culture” structure; include disclaimers; provide origin/traceability notes
Exhibition Interpretation	Cultural education; contextual explanation	Museum visitors; cultural audiences	Clarity standards; institutional language norms	Maintain cultural depth; avoid stereotyping	Retain key terms + explanatory notes; provide historical/cultural background
Museum/historical documentation	Cultural preservation; knowledge systematization	Scholars; cultural institutions	Documentation standards; heritage-preservation norms	Protect terminology system; high precision	Preserve terms (transliteration + notes); maintain theoretical framework
Science Communication / Policy texts	Public education; policy clarity; normative communication	General public; regulators; policymakers	Scientific evidence requirements; policy language standards	Prevent pseudo-scientization; emphasize clarity	Scientific language dominant; culturally sensitive explanations of TCM concepts

5.3 Conflicts between chesterman’s ethics of commitment and Pym’s ethics of cooperation

Ethical challenges in translating shenrong culture can also be interpreted through tensions within translation ethics theory itself, most notably the conflict between Chesterman’s ethics of commitment (or representation) and Pym’s ethics of cooperation. Chesterman’s framework stresses the translator’s responsibility to faithfully represent the source text and culture, maintaining the integrity of meaning, style, and cultural values while avoiding distortive rewritings that dilute structural or cultural depth (Hasan, 2024; Hu, 2024). For culturally dense shenrong texts, this approach helps preserve TCM philosophy and traditional knowledge, preventing shenrong from being reduced to a shallow functional commodity image. However, excessive insistence on “strong representation” may result in translations that are too culturally dense and cognitively inaccessible for general health consumers or non-specialist audiences, thereby limiting communicative reach and effectiveness (Ramadilla et al., 2024).

By contrast, Pym’s ethics of cooperation emphasizes the translator’s role as a facilitator of intercultural communication, prioritizing target audience comprehension and interaction. This approach encourages flexible adaptation and rewriting when needed to reduce misunderstanding and communicative barriers (Hasan, 2024;