Study on Translation of Classic Literature from the Perspective of Lexical Pragmatics

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Abstract

With China's increasingly close tie with the world, the spreading of Chinese culture has become a general trend. The spreading of literary works cannot be realistic without translation. This study discusses the guiding and enlightening role of lexical pragmatics in the English translation of literary works from the perspective of lexical pragmatics. This study holds that lexical pragmatic theory can not only improve the accuracy of sentences and words translation but also, more importantly, the proper usage of lexical pragmatic strategies can improve the communication effect of literary works.

Keywords

Lexical Pragmatics; Pragmatic Enrichment; Literature Translation.

1. Introduction

The translation study of Chinese literature classics is an indispensable part of Chinese culture's "going out" strategy. At present, fruitful results have been achieved in both the theoretical and practice fields of the English translation of literary classics in China. Previous translation theories, including literary translation, either focused on equivalence in the translation process from the perspective of language form or on the analyses or comments of translating texts from a macro-narrative perspective. These studies reveal the inherent laws and mechanisms in literary translation. At the same time, it should be noted that the role of these translation theories in guiding literary translation at the micro-level is still relatively limited. As vocabulary becomes more and more the center of linguistic research, there is a trend of vocabulary-centered research in linguistic theory. Hudson (1998) calls this research tendency in linguistics lexicalism or lexical disposition.

Lexical pragmatics studies the meanings of vocabulary in language use and the role vocabulary plays in language communication. Lexical pragmatics is "based on the lexicon, combined with pragmatic mechanisms, contextual knowledge, and encyclopedic knowledge to study the lexical meaning (especially the incompletely expressed meaning of words), the evolution and changing process of the lexical meaning in use (Wilson 2003), and explain the operation and changing mechanism theoretically" (Zeng Yantao 2006). Compared with lexical semantics, which uses formal logic to conduct dynamic research on lexical meaning, lexical pragmatics is dynamic research that makes a systematic and explanatory description of lexical-related pragmatic phenomena (Chen Xinren 2005; Ran Yongping 2012).

The meaning of sentences is calculated by the compositionality of lexical meanings, which is the main principle of compositionality in lexical semantics (Fromkin 2017), however, the meanings of some sentences cannot be calculated by the compositionality of the lexical meanings of their constituents. Lexical pragmatics points out that in the process of language use, language users pragmatically enrich words according to context and other factors so that the meaning of words is no longer the dictionary meaning or core meaning of words (Ran Yongping 2012). The

procedures of meaning process by language users in actual communications must be taken into consideration in translation studies of Chinese literature classics.

2. The Lexical Pragmatics and the Translation of Literature

In literary works, the author or protagonist achieves successful communication by adopting certain pragmatic enrichment strategies in the process of communication. These lexical pragmatic strategies, including pragmatic enrichment, should be reflected in the translation or translation.

Appropriate treatment of lexical pragmatic strategies can help improve the acceptance of translations in the target language world. One of the reasons why Hawks and Minford's version of "A Dream of Red Mansions" is more acceptable than Yang Xianyi and Dai Naidie's version is that the translation deals with the lexical-pragmatic strategies in the original text according to the lexical-pragmatic strategies in the target language., making it easier for readers of the target language to receive and understand (Ran Yongping 2012). Tan Fumin's (2014) research pointed out that the use of lexical pragmatic mechanisms can help improve the translation accuracy of words and sentences. This is because, from the perspective of lexical pragmatics, translation pays more attention to pragmatic and social equivalence, rather than the linguistic equivalence of the target language and the target language (Ran Yongping 2012: 201).

Ran Yongping (2012) made a detailed analysis and discussion on the pragmatic enrichment strategies of vocabulary in the book "Exploration of Lexical Pragmatics" and pointed out that the pragmatic enrichment strategies commonly used by communicators in the process of communication include pragmatic expansion, there are three strategies of pragmatic narrowing and prototyping category extension, which correspond to the looseness, incompleteness, and temporality of vocabulary in use. However, the research on the application of lexical pragmatics in translation practice is relatively rare, and there has not been any translation research or translation evaluation based on lexical pragmatics at home and abroad.

This study believes that translation practice based on lexical pragmatics must be based on a translation from the perspective of lexical semantics. In other words, translation based on lexical pragmatics is a two-step process. First of all, the translator must carry out the meaning conversion of formal equivalence, which also conforms to the definition of translation "any translation activity is the conversion of two different systems of language symbols" (Xu Jun 2014: 4). Secondly, according to the ubiquitous lexical pragmatic strategies of the target language, the language in the target language text is processed to make it conform to the language communication rules of the target language users.

3. The Characteristics of Lexical Pragmatics and Their Relation to the Translation of Literature

Ran Yongping (2012) pointed out that lexical information is loose and incomplete, so lexical pragmatics are temporary. This chapter explains these three characteristics and their guiding role in literary translation.

3.1. The Looseness of the Lexical Pragmatics

The lexical-semantic features of the translated language are not completely equivalent to those of the target language, because the non-literal semantics of the lexical meanings of the translated language is subject to the influence of speech context, situational context, and social and cultural context, with plasticity and modulation. The tone change is generated by the reader's reading of lexical information based on the cognitive context. In literary texts, the author has to use a variety of rhetorical expressions to describe the characters' characters and highlight their relationships. In many cases, these rhetorical strategies have the particularity of

the register, so their lexical and semantic features have strong understanding variability. Therefore, the looseness of literary texts is extremely strong.

3.2. The Incompleteness of the Lexical Pragmatics

From the perspective of lexical pragmatics, the translation process is essentially a communicative process between the target language writer, the translator, and the target language reader. However, the communicative intent in the communicative process is not completely equal to the informational intent, so there are a lot of inconsistencies in language forms and language representations in the translation process. In literary texts, because the cultural bearing capacity of the source language and the target language is strong, translation also reflects the process of fusion of foreign cultures and native cultures from the perspective of functional equivalence. Inconsistency is characterized. Therefore, literary translators need to use various translation theories of foreignization or domestication, and make full use of the incompleteness of vocabulary, so that the translation can reflect the cultural characteristics of the text based on faithfulness and accessibility.

3.3. The Temporality of the Lexical Pragmatics

With the incompleteness of lexical pragmatics, translators often temporarily construct lexical-semantic features that do not exist in the target language based on the communicative intent of the lexicon, to adapt to the reading demands and comprehension paradigms of the target language readers, which can be called the temporality of lexical pragmatics. Literary texts have more flexible understanding space and broad imagination space, so the translator needs to temporarily activate the conceptual structure in the mental space, endow the specific pragmatic characteristics of lexical characteristics, and then make full use of the temporary pragmatics of words to create Literary translation works with literary tension.

4. Pragmatic Enrichment Strategies and Their Relation to the Translation of Literature

Ran Yongping (2012) pointed out that in the process of communication, the communicator enriches the communicator's discourse according to the information from the context, to realize the correct understanding and interpretation of the discourse in the communication process. In this process, the pragmatic enrichment means adopted by communicators mainly include pragmatic expansion, pragmatic narrowing, and prototype category expansion. Therefore, when translating dialogues in literary works, it is necessary to translate the communicators used in the communication process. Pragmatic enrichment means. Of course, these pragmatic enrichment means are reflected in the final translation with the help of vocabulary. This chapter starts with these three means and explains the influence of pragmatic enrichment means on translation and its dissemination effect.

4.1. Pragmatic Expansion

Ran Yongping (2012) pointed out that the pragmatic expansion of vocabulary is the expansion of lexical meaning in the process of pragmatics, that is, the extension of the core meaning of vocabulary.

For example, the proverb "tou liang huang zhu" (偷梁换柱) was translated into English by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang as "underhand plan to fob off a different bride on…". In the "Dream of Red Mansions" translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, the proverb that is linked to the context of Baoyu's marriage, which in turn reflects that the translated language has more semantic encyclopedic knowledge than the source language. Thus, it deepens the reader's understanding of the specific cultural elements of the original, and the cultural characteristics of the translation are deepened.

4.2. Pragmatic Narrowing

According to Ran Yongping (2012), the pragmatic narrowing can be understood as a pragmatic strategy opposite to pragmatic expansion. In this strategy, the meaning of words is narrowed. Zhou Shuang (2007), from the perspective of relevance theory, pointed out that pragmatic narrowing is a process of finding relevant information. The specific operation is " a process in which the listener selects and determines the expected and relevant meaning according to the coded meaning or prototype meaning of a word ". This process does not operate independently, it must also be integrated with the context in which the word appears.

However, in Hawks' translation of "A Dream of Red Mansions", the original meaning of "tou liang huan zhu" is eliminated, and its conceptual meaning is preserved. At the pragmatic level, the influence of literariness on translation communication is weakened, and the tendency of alienation is more obvious, but more It is helpful for the target language readers to understand the original idiom connotation at the cognitive level. This is a typical usage of pragmatic narrowing.

4.3. The Extension of Prototype Category

The extension of the lexical prototype category is to regard the meaning of vocabulary as a cognitive category. The cognitive category theory believes that the elements in the category have core and peripheral points. This pragmatic strategy is manifested in the deflection of lexical prototype meaning or core meaning (Ran Yongping: 2012). During translation, the translator can change the meaning of some words in the original text as needed.

The "feng qing yue zhai" (风情月债) is translated as "I preside over romances and unrequited love on earth, the grief of women, and the passion of men in the mundane world." By Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang. In Yang's version, this proverb literally contains multiple images, among which "feng" and "yue" do not refer to natural phenomena. These two words in English do not seem to have much connection with the love affair between men and women. The translation will not be able to well express the prototypical cognitive meaning of Chinese idioms, and it will also make the translator bewildered. Therefore, Yang's translation uses "romance" to refer to " wind and moon " in the original text, which belongs to the cognitive level of translation. This operation represents the prototypical cognitive meaning, and fully mobilizes the reader's cognitive organization mechanism and memory mechanism, allowing them to expand their cognition along with the translation, and enrich and enrich the understanding of the text.

5. Conclusion

Lexical pragmatics is a new branch of pragmatics, and its theories play an important guiding role in translation practice. Under the guidance of the theory of lexical pragmatics, the translated versions of literary works will be inevitably better accepted by readers in the translated world, thus promoting the "going out" of Chinese literary classics and making Chinese culture better known to foreigners, understood, and then promoting the image of China's great power to shape and establish.

Acknowledgments

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