A Study of English Translation within the Framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics

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Abstract: In recent years, with the rapid development of social economy, China's foreign exchange has become increasingly frequent, and the demand for English translators has gradually increased, from the original reading and translation ability to comprehensive application ability. The application of systemic functional linguistics can improve the quality of English translation, and has high application value and popularization value. Based on this, this paper elaborates the relevant theories of English translation and systemic functional linguistics within the framework of systemic functional linguistics. In addition, this paper makes a thorough study of English translation from three aspects: textual meta-function, conceptual meta-function and interpersonal meta-function.

1. Research Background

1.1 Literature review

As the most widely used language in the world, English has gradually penetrated into all aspects of people's life and production. English translation, as a medium of cross-linguistic information transmission, plays an important role in production and life, and has attracted more and more attention from relevant scholars. Based on the contextual theory, Wang Tong and Chen Lixia made a comparative analysis of the previous translations of A Dream of Red Mansions, and explored the different roles of functional contextual views in different English versions (Wang and Chen, 2014). Based on systemic functional linguistics and discourse analysis theory, Peng Hong makes a comparative analysis of the coherence mechanism and coherence mode in text translation, which brings some inspiration and guidance to translation practice (Peng, 2014). From the perspective of systemic functional linguistics, Meng Chao and other scholars have made a thorough study of legal translation from three aspects: register theory of legal text translation and systemic functional linguistics, Theme-Rheme theory of legal text translation and systemic functional linguistics, translation of legal vocabulary and hierarchical view of systemic functional linguistics (Meng et al, 2015). Zou Yanyan embarked on the three purely functional functions of systemic functional linguistics, and made a purely functional analysis of some of the contents of the English versions of the Analects of Confucius translated by predecessors, which provided criteria and objective basis for the evaluation and evaluation of the English versions (Zou, 2015). From the perspective of interpersonal meaning and based on functional linguistics, Gong Fei evaluates and analyses the psychological description, behavior and dialogue of the characters in the translation of Red Sorghum (Gong, 2015). Based on the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Xiao Ting expounds the research status and basic knowledge of Tea Classic, analyses the relevant theories of translation and Systemic Functional Linguistics and the relationship between them, and makes a thorough study of the translation of Tea Classic (Xiao, 2016). Wei Ye mainly studies the translation questions in CET-4, and further puts forward the methods and strategies to improve the teaching level of English translation in Colleges and universities on the basis of systemic functional linguistics (Wei, 2018). Zhang Mi mainly discusses the current situation and deficiencies between translation and systemic linguistics, and reflects on relevant issues (Zhang, 2019).

1.2 Research purposes

With the development of globalization, English has become an important foreign language in many countries, which brings great opportunities for English translation. However, due to cultural differences, there are still many problems in English translation, and there is not enough attention paid to the differences between artistry and language in English translation. In the existing studies, there are still some deficiencies in the study of the external factors, such as ideology and culture, which lead to the differences in translation. Based on the framework of systemic functional linguistics, this paper elaborates the relationship between English translation and systemic functional linguistics. Furthermore, starting from the three metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics, this paper further studies English translation in order to provide new ideas for the development of English translation.

2. Overview of Related Theories

Systemic functional linguistics theory was founded by Halliday, a British linguist, on the basis of anthropological functional theory. According to anthropological functional theory, language has two main characteristics: instrumentality and functionality. Therefore, context is very important in language learning. Halliday founded Systemic Functional Linguistics on this basis. In this theory, emphasis is placed on the relationship between semantics and context, on the practical application of language, and on the combination of practice and theory. Specifically, context can be divided into mode, tenor and field. Language function can be divided into textual metafunction, conceptual metafunction and interpersonal metafunction. In order to realize the language function, we need the coordination of the three metafunctions. Moreover, we need to understand the essence of language more deeply and thoroughly.

Textual metafunction is essentially a function of the speaker as an organizer. This function integrates interpersonal meta-function and conceptual meta-function into a discourse to form a unified whole and act on context together. Conceptual metafunction refers to the information or deixis function of language. It is the universal function of language to express the logical relationship and experience in the subjective and objective world. This function mainly expresses people's psychological experience and social experience, as well as the logical relationship between affairs in discourse. The interpersonal metafunction mainly shows the speaker's motivation, attitude, status, identity, and the speaker's functions of establishing social relations, participating in social activities and judging affairs. These three metafunctions are the organizational principles for the formation of linguistic structure and belong to the internal functions of language. Moreover, these three metafunctions are mainly embodied in different language structures. The embodiment of textual metafunction mainly depends on cohesion, information structure and thematic structure of sentences. The manifestation of conceptual metafunction mainly depends on the voice system, ergative analysis and transitivity system. The manifestation of interpersonal metafunction mainly depends on normalization, modality and discourse mood.

In a translation, the choice of grammatical structure and vocabulary is restricted by the metafunction of language, register and genre. Therefore, the choice of vocabulary in the target text requires full consideration of the functional consistency between the source text and the target text. This paper analyses the intonation and rhythm of the translated text, the logical relationship between short sentences and short sentences, the information structure in the text and the theme structure of the sentence, the modal expression and mood structure in the short sentences, the cohesive mode of grammar and vocabulary in the sentence, and the transitivity of the short sentences in order to analyze the thinking mode and expression expressed in the translated text. Habits, whether they match the target language. The analytical model of textual meta-theory in systemic functional linguistics provides a new translation model for text translation. From the external environment of the language, to the direct situation expressed in the text, to the overall language structure of the text, it creates the level of language translation from the outside to the inside, from the macro to the micro.

3. Systemic Functional Linguistics-Based Translation of Three Meta-Functional English

3.1 English translation of textual metafunction

Textual metafunction plays an important role in linguistics. Text is a collective expression, which can make words and tones have different meanings. In the process of using language to communicate and express, people organize different language structures to arrange the content of a text. In the layout, the logical relationship among sentences, sentences and thematic elements will be reflected. In other words, the metafunction of discourse is to express semantics through linguistic structure and to embody discourse through the layout of sentence components. The realization of textual metafunction mainly depends on three semantic systems: lexical cohesion, information structure and Theme-Rheme structure.

Theme-rheme structure is embodied in compound sentences composed of short sentences and short sentences. Short sentences are divided into themes and rhemes. Theme is the starting point of short sentences and the starting point of language information expression. Rheme is the rest of short sentences. Therefore, at the beginning of a text, the main ideas and key issues involved in the whole article are usually written. The advantage of this approach is that it enables the reader to enter the context of the text from the very beginning. At the end of a text, a general summary statement of the preceding text is made, or the connotation and implication of the text are pointed out. There are two main ways to divide themes: one is to divide them into multiple themes and single themes, which are mainly determined by the number of themes in a text. The other is to divide themes into marked themes and unmarked themes according to whether they are marked or not. Among them, marked theme is not the subject of a short sentence, but unmarked theme is the subject of a short sentence.

Information structure refers to the structure of information unit in short sentence complex, which is mainly composed of new information and known information, and the two information structures interact. Generally speaking, the information structure is not expressed by linguistic units, but by tone stress. Therefore, few articles have analyzed the information structure of written discourse.

Cohesion refers to the semantic relations expressed between the linguistic components in a text. Cohesion occurs when one language is used to interpret another. When the text and the situation are coherent, it is consistent with register. Cohesion occurs when a text is coherent with itself. Whether a text has cohesion or not is mainly determined by whether there are cohesive devices in the text.

3.2 English translation of conceptual metafunction

Conceptual metafunction expresses the speaker's experience and experience of the objective and subjective world, which involves many different factors such as location, time, things, characters and so on. Conceptual metafunction consists of three subsystems: normalization, voice and transitivity. Among the three subsystems, transitivity is the most discussed. Because the transitivity subsystem mainly reflects people's inner thoughts, external behavior and what they see and hear, and it also indicates the environmental components and participants in different processes. These processes can be roughly divided into six categories. The first is the material process, which mainly expresses the occurrence, change and development of things and the process of people doing things. The second is the mental process, which mainly expresses people's thinking, emotion, vision and other processes. The third category is the process of relationship. The main expression of Baidu is the relationship between different things. The fourth category is the behavioral process, which expresses the physiological processes of dreaming, breathing, laughing and crying. The fifth category is the speech process, which mainly expresses the process of information exchange. The sixth category is the process of existence, which mainly expresses the existence of something.

In the process of English translation, it is necessary to clearly divide the process components of the source language, and interpret and interpret them from the perspective of transitivity. Through the analysis of transitivity, we can quantify the general information to a certain extent, so that the information in the whole text can be divided into detailed levels. In this way, the target language can be translated to the greatest extent close to the semantics of the source language. In the process of actual English translation, it is necessary to analyze the transitivity system of the source language, and then consider comprehensively the characteristics of the cultural context and the target

language. In this way, it can provide translators with more ways of translation reference, and help readers compare the differences between the source text and the target text from the perspective of process type.

3.3 English translation of interpersonal metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction of language is mainly realized through the creation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. It can show the psychological activities and personal experience of speaking, as well as the speaker's motivation, attitude, judgment and evaluation of things, status and identity. In addition, it also reflects the speaker's own views on the subjective psychological world and the objective real world. Generally speaking, people's communicative roles are mainly divided into two kinds, one is demand, the other is giving. In other words, the speaker can give the listener some information or practical things. In the process of exchanging information, if the exchange is information, the short sentences in the text are the form of propositions. At this time, listeners can hold conflicting, doubtful, negative and positive attitudes towards this proposition. When the exchange in the discourse is goods or services, the short sentences will appear in the form of suggestions. At this time, the listener can choose to refuse or execute.

The manifestation of interpersonal metafunction mainly depends on modality system and mood system. Among them, modal system mainly uses modal adverbials or modal verbs to express the speaker's responsibility or willingness, and the possibility of events, so as to accurately explain the communication relationship between the two sides. The mood system is to show the meaning of a short sentence through its limited components and subject. In English translation, the mood system mainly includes imperative mood, interrogative mood and declarative mood. In addition, the interpersonal metafunction of a text can also be realized through pronouns, nouns, verbs and other words. This is mainly because these words can also directly express interpersonal relationships in discourse.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, English translation from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics is a better way. Through the analysis of English translation works under the framework of systemic linguistics, translators can re-examine the problems encountered in the process of translation. And in discourse analysis and translation studies, it can also make use of linguistic analysis function to make translation comparison. At present, there are still many problems in English translation that are relatively difficult to solve, which need to be further studied from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics.

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