

Studying Language Characteristics of English Film Subtitle and Its E-C Translation Strategies

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Abstract. As the enlargement of exchange of cross-cultural communication, especially in the field of film (movie) culture international exchange, more and more students, scholars pay more attention to this field. Compared with considerable impact on the public, however, the research on audiovisual translation is still insufficient in China. This paper will keep their pace and use some recent research to make some progress, and then it hopes can be useful to the audiovisual translation.

1. Language Characteristics of English Film Subtitle

Film (movie) is a branch of art, literature, while language of subtitle is a kind of special language. Different things have different features, so language of subtitle is the same. Language of English film subtitle shares most characteristics of art and literature. Language of film subtitle is a way that makes the spoken language displaying on screen. According to the predecessors' research, it was figured out five language characteristics of English film subtitle.

1.1. Popularity

The audiences of film are from different classes and a successful film need take care of the needs of the most part of different classes. Then film or movie is kind of intuitionistic art and it faces the numerous audiences, this asks the language of subtitle need have this characteristic. Popularity means the language is accepted by mass audiences, then the way of expression is not in a very literal way and the contents of the film is neither too complex nor too simple.

1.2. Sensibility

People have different feelings or emotions in different circumstances. People is moody, it is not easy to say one is happy sad or angry, etc. One maybe happy when there is a thing make one have a good feeling, but when there is a bad thing happen it will make one's feeling fall down. People's feelings or emotions are changing sometimes. Actors and actress act in the film as people expressed in the real world. And then it could express the feeling as the words in people's daily life. The change of the emotions in a film could enhance the artistic value and color of emotion in a film.

2. The Differences between Chinese and English Film Culture

Film is a carrier of the culture of the people living in a country, a distraction or an area. Actually, differences between Chinese and English film culture is an epitome of the differences between Chinese and English culture. Different film culture carries different culture of different people. Everything has its own features .different cultures of different people also have its own features. They are different in psychologies, thinking patterns, taste conceptions, value conceptions and religious belief. These could be found in films from different areas.

2.1. The Different Psychology

Every nation had a fairly long historical evolution, in the long historical conditions and because of many factors differences, every nation in psychological there are more or less differences. Psychological characteristics may from many aspects to reflect to stamp, this can be said of several differences between the comprehensive. A nation in the historical development of the long river, in the common survival and interact with each other in the process, in the forming of the nationality unique external survival way at the same time, are constantly build its internal psychological pattern, form the nation's unique psychological characteristics. A look, an action or a word often reveals the

unique national sincere feeling, impressed with deep national mark. From the perspective of feelings, it can figure out the two national psychological differences.

2.2. The Different Thinking pattern

Chinese people think much of collectivism in dealing with all things, the benefit of the group always been thought firstly, and personal interests take second place. Of course this is helpful to strengthen the coherence of the group, but so it seems to making some obstacles for individualism. We see in western countries. Here we take Britain and American as examples. People there most advocate individualism, but they never advocate it blindly. They have a base line to keep their individualism. Two different nations have some differences in their ways of thinking, especially, own to the affection of different social systems, their differences are even much more.

2.3. The Different Values Conception

“Dragon” in Chinese language symbolize good luck, and honor and majesty and power. Because “the dragon” is a group of god into the sea, to the miraculous animals, then becomes the Chinese nation is the symbolic image of totem, was endowed with divine, sovereign and luck, special and all kinds of other commendation. However, in western countries such as Britain and America, people on the dragon and no opinion, because in their culture, “dragon” is a kind of can spewing fireworks, ruthless terrible animal, it not only to swallow the irrational human beings and animals, and make water and fire disaster, endanger human survival.

2.4. The Different of Religious Culture

Different religion faiths will be displayed in their own languages and cultures, English and Americans trust God. The think God created everything in the world .Chinese religion is called Buddhism, most of us trust Heaven. “Heaven” is not the same as it is in Chinese culture. Sheep in western religion means sinner .In Diggins’ famous novel *David Comfier*, it described once, Younger Kobffier with his mother goes to church to pray. He saw a steady sheep was looking around. Then he wrote, “I look at the sunlight coming, in the open door through the porch, and there I saw a stray sheep I don’t mean as inner, but mutton-half making up his mind to come into the church.” He added an additional explanation to show his real meaning of “stray sheep” is the simple meaning, but not relational meaning. We most know the meaning of sheep in religion, but if we didn’t do like this, most of us will be contused.

3. Translation Strategies of English Film Subtitle---“Domestication and Foreignization”

Subtitling refers to the translation of the spoken and(or)written source text of all audiovisual product into a written target text which is added onto the images of the original product, usually at the bottom of the screen. The early 20th century witnessed the introduction of a large number of movies from Europe and America, before China developed the movie and TV series industry. Then for a long time Chinese people start paying attention to this field.

3.1 Domestication

The domestication translation strategy includes “the careful selection of texts which lead themselves to being translated in this manner, the conscious adoption of a fluent; natural sounding target language style, the adaptation of target text to conform to target discourse types, the interpolation of explanatory material, the remove of source language regalia and the general harmonization of target text with target language preconceptions and preferences”. In a word, when use theory to do subtitle translation, the Chinese subtitle should be accepted by the mass audiences.

3.1.1 Decimation

When the content of the subtitle of the first theme of the film with the content without much correlation, this time in this part of the original language subtitle translation can choose completely omitted translation mode.

For example: In the movie *Kung Fu Panda 2*, at the beginning there are some subtitle introduces the information about the company and the work group. But this information is not the important part or necessary to the mass audience. So the translators chose complete omission. Translators choose complete omission way can arouse audiences’ more interest and attention. But also reduce the workload of translation. The second is, when the subtitle of the beginning contains some important information or related part. At this moment of subtitle translation is about to choose

alternative omission way and the important part will be saved and translated. This can make the audience gradually catch the main contents of the movie. It can let audiences has a more complete understanding about the movie.

3.1.2 Condensation

Subtitle has limited characteristic of time and space. This limits the captions of the same time Chinese characters. In the format of the movie and TV series, for example, generally speaking, each time the subtitles in a line is the best, and most two lines with each line has not more than 16 characters. If beyond the standard, the audience probably couldn't get enough information carried in the subtitles in the residence time reading, then it affects the understanding of the plot. In addition, subtitle is a kind of appreciation of the film and television play auxiliary tool; it never can take up all the audience attention. So the premise of the subtitles is the sentences should be more concise, and then the audiences can get a better understanding about what they are watching. Then the audience would enjoy the film and television play itself more investment. In view of this, the subtitles in the process of translation is used more language reduction or condensation strategy, as far as possible to make the sentence be concise.

3.1.3 Reduction

Is the overall reduction in the original in translator seems to remove the information or content readers don't need. Sometimes take out the original of the residual branches withered, sometimes squeeze out the extra water, and change in the original performance for trade-off. Shrink is the compression, is the concentration of the original content. Subtitle translation of time, space, and the limitations in the translation must the exclusion, also can saying is concentrated. But such cuts although lose some information. But is not the content of the film express, at the same time for the understanding of the film also won't cause much influence. Such as when there are some words in the film are too long and audiences are very clear about the contents, then there is no need to fully translate these sentences.

3.1.4 Description

The narrative subtitle translation is actually the way with the narrative about the film; this is often used for documentary subtitles in translation. The documentary was narrative approach to introduce the film content. Said a little bit simpler like to tell the story of the same way that translation is easy to be acceptable to the Chinese audience. This is often used in the documentary films.

3.1.5 Alternation

Due to the differences of culture of so many of the western culture and not know many, even to the understanding of the domestic culture is not deep. So when the audience watching English films and TV, they hope is the clear subtitles, look there is a familiar feeling.

3.2. Foreignization

Dictionary of Translation Studies defines foreignization as "a term used by Venuti to designate the type of translation in which a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original." So this way of subtitle translation is more respective to the original language, it can represent the original culture to the audiences which have a good level about the cultural study, or have a deep interests to it.

3.2.1 Formal Correspondence

Formal equivalence asks the Chinese translation of subtitle should be equal in the syntax, orders. But this is not very easy for subtitle translators. They must consider more. First they need to use the proper sentences to care about the original sentences, then they need to translate the meaning well to make the audience can catch the information they need.

3.2.2 Literal Translation with Comments

Compared with pure dubbing, it is the same to help the audience understand English films and television plays. But subtitling translation has another advantage than pure dubbing. And that is subtitle translation can add comments and do not interfere with the audience watching films or television plays. Because of the background customs and habits are different between Chinese and English. Sometimes it cannot be found the equal expression to replace the original English in

Chinese.

3.2.3 Transliteration

For this way of subtitle translation, is not usually used. This way is usually used to translate some words of sound, place and name of things. Onomatopoeia often appears in films. According the study of lexics, it can be noticed that English words to describe sounds have a very close relation with the real sound. In this way, translators can use original words when translating words that describing sound. For example, it is usually see that somebody knock one's door, then there are some sound used to describe it "bang, bang..." these words can be translated or just use the original words. Because these words are familiar in syllables of Chinese and English.

4. Conclusion

In a word, with the enlargement of cultural exchanges in China. Film, as a more and more popular way of common culture, is an effective means of cross-culture communication. Language of English movie subtitles has the characteristics such as colloquialism; popularity, sensibility, instantaneous existence and space limit. Obviously, these set many obstacles for the subtitle translation. They are different in psychologies, thinking patterns, aesthetic views, value conceptions and religions. For different audiences' needs the way of translation is different, when the level of second language is higher we can choose foreignization, but if they are not have the ability to understand the other language we need choose domestication. In the final analysis, translators need choose the proper way when they do subtitle translation works, if need to care for the different audiences' tastes. So a good English subtitle translation can let the audience appreciate to the original flavor of foreign cultures and customs, so as to achieve the cross-cultural communication film role.

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