

Applied Translation Research from the Perspective of Functional Translation Theory

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Abstract—Functional translation theory regards translation as a kind of "cultural transformation" and "communicative interaction", an intercultural communication activity oriented by the function of target language. In the application translation practice, the theory provides a theoretical basis for the choice of translation strategy. The translator can select information according to the function of text and communication, select the translation strategy, and reconstruct the translation form and content according to the cultural context of the target language.

Keywords—functional translation theory; applied translation; translation strategy

I. INTRODUCTION

Rice, one of the representatives of German functional translation theory, links text types, functions and translation methods, and divides text into "informative text", "expressive text", "operative text" and "audio-visual text", and proposed corresponding translation methods. Later, on the basis of this theory, Nord added the "phatic function" to replace the "audio-visual function", and proposed two major translation strategies: "documentary translation" and "Instrumental translation" (Newmark, 2001: 47-51) according to the relationship between the text function and the purpose of translation. On the basis of this, Newmark adds two functions, "aesthetic function" and "metalingual function" to the function of the text, and concludes the three basic text forms of translation, namely "expression", "expressive text", "informative text" and "vocative text" (Newmark, 2004: 20, 47) and proposed "semantic translation" and "communicative translation" (Newmark, 2004: 38, 29). These studies closely combined translation activities with textual functions, and clarified the relationship between text types and translation strategies from the perspective of language function.

Functional translation theory believes that translation is a kind of "cultural transfer", a kind of "communicative interaction", a kind of intercultural communication activity oriented by the function of the target language (Jia Wenbo, 2007: 9). Therefore, in the process of translation, the translator should select the source text information, translation strategy and translation form according to the client's translation requirements and translation purposes, combined with the expected communicative function of the

text, the expectation of the target reader and the cultural context of the target language in order to effectively achieve cultural transformation and translation purpose.

Jia Wenbo (2007: 9) believes that applied translation is a practical translation with the main purpose of transmitting information and paying attention to the effect of information transmission. It has the characteristics of strong practicability and wide application. Applied translation is different from literary translation which focuses on emotional meaning and aesthetic meaning; its content covers almost all kinds of words in daily contact and practical application except literary translation, involving external propaganda, social life, production field and business activities etc.. (Fang Mengzhi, 2005). The text genre of applied translation includes government documents, notices, scientific papers, news reports, legal documents, popular books, foreign trade letters, advertisements, product brochures, travel guides, popular science books, etc., with informational, anonymity, persuasion and utilitarian feature. Because most of the text genre of applied translation belongs to the "information" text and "inductive" text of functional translation theory, these characteristics determined that the main purpose of translation is to provide information and persuade audience. The form and content of the original text should be obedient to the need for translation and the communicative function and purpose of the translation. It can be seen that no matter the text function, translation requirement or translation purpose, application translation coincides with the functional translation theory. There is indeed some internal connection and inevitable law between the two. Therefore, in this sense, functional translation theory can not only provide direction for application translation, but also provide a feasible way for translators to successfully implement translation strategies for different texts.

II. THE IMPACT OF TRANSLATION REQUIREMENTS ON THE SELECTION OF MULTIPLE INFORMATION IN THE SOURCE TEXT

According to the functional translation theory, the translator should have a translation requirement which can detailed the purpose of the translation before starting the translation, including the expected function of the translation and the expected reader, the medium of the translation, the purpose of the translation, the time, the place, the occasion,

etc. ,and according to the purpose. The cultural environment determines the feasibility of translation requirements. In the process of translation, the translator should select and translate the multi-information in the source text based on the translation requirements, the expected function of the translation, the socio-cultural background knowledge of the target reader, the expectation of the translation or the social knowledge and communication needs. Through flexible processing of the original content and form, in order to achieve the intended translation purpose of the translation, and to achieve the expected communicative function.

Functional translation theory believes that the source text is only "provide information". Therefore, the translator should accurately grasp the communicative intention of the original author according to the purpose of the translation and the specific conditions of the target reader and the request of the client. Select the multi-information, and on this basis, select the appropriate translation strategies and methods as well of the form and content of the translation in order to achieve specific communicative functions.

Example 1: 云冈石窟——位于山西大同西北武周山（又名云冈）。创建于公元 453 年（北魏文成帝兴安二年）。以后献文、孝文帝都在这里续建，历百余年而成。这里有大小洞窟五十多个，各窟佛像共约五万一千余尊。大者高十七米，小者短到数寸。雕饰奇伟，冠于一世。在中国历史、宗教上，以及东方艺术上，都具有巨大价值。

Reference translation: Located in Datong, Shanxi Province, the Yungang Grottoes are a complex of over 50 Buddhist grottoes enshrining over 51,000 Buddhist statues as large as 17 meters or as short as a few inches. Built for over a hundred years, they are of great historic and artistic value. (Liu Jinlong, 2007)

The purpose of the translation is to introduce the attraction to foreign tourists (translated reader) to stimulate their enjoyment and therefore both information function and inductive function. Nord (2001: 50, 51) suggested using "equifunctional translation" in Tool Translation" to translate "informational text. Accordingly, during the translation process, the translator cuts down some information that is less important to the target reader (such as the specific location of the grotto and the builder). At the same time, considering the difference between English and Chinese, the translator also omitted some relatively empty words (carving singular and majestic, crowned in the world).The translation is not only simple and practical, but also retains the main information of the original text, in addition, the translation uses the target reader's customary expression and language form, conveys the relevant information of the attraction, highlights the induction function, plays a role in arousing the interest of the tourist, and just achieves the purpose of translation.

Example 2: 燕山脚下精兵云集，渤海海域战舰巡弋，内蒙古草原铁甲疾驰，东北密林 导弹矗立……一场全面展示人民解放军打赢未来高科技战争决心、信心和能力的大演兵， 10 月 13 日上午同时在四地展开。……这是告别二十世纪的大演兵，这是迎接新世纪的大检阅。

Reference translation: The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) this morning began the largest show of military

training achievements since its 1964 grand-scale contest of military skills. The four-day military exercises are being carried out at four sites. The primary location is a military shooting range in a Beijing suburb. The other three sites are the training bases in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, used by ground forces; in Bohai Sea, for the navy; and in the North-east China, for strategic missiles troops. (Liu Meihua, 2009)

Since the domestic readers tend to have an ornate phraseology and a rich literary style, the original text fully reflects this feature, Contrary to this, English readers are more accustomed to objective and low key statements of facts, because in their view, gorgeous words are not conducive to the dissemination and clear expression of semantics, and sometimes even considered to be exaggerated. If literal translation, the original words in the article "fine soldiers gathered", "warship cruise", "iron armor gallop", "missile standing" and other words straight out, the translation will inevitably appear to be cumbersome and rhetorical, thus losing the English report concise and clear features that make English readers unable to read. Therefore, the translator has cut this part, only four venues have been declaratively located, and the original text has been rewritten, adding information such as "large-scale military training since 1964", thus accurately transmitting the original author. The purpose of writing highlights the guiding role of functional translation theory in applied translation.

III. THE IMPACT OF TEXT FUNCTION ON THE USE OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

As mentioned earlier, "informational" texts and "inductive" texts account for the majority of applied translation text genres, the main features of which are informational, inductive and anonymity. Functional translation theory believes that the translation of "informational" text should be based on "communicating information" and "consistently conveying text information". The accuracy and truth of information is the functional core of such text, not the formal equivalence of language level (Jia Wenbo, 2007).Therefore, to accurately convey the original text information, we should not blindly apply the language form of the original text. We must pay attention to the cultural differences between the source language and the translated language. The form of the translation should be subordinated to the idiom of the target language and familiar to the target readers.

Functional translation theory believes that the textual function of source and target language in translation cannot be absolutely equal. In fact, the function of any text is not single, absolute, and often a text has several different functions, but some of its functions occupy a dominant position. According to Newmark's point of view, applied translation should be a communicative translation. Communicative translation takes the reader as the service center, with special emphasis on the readability and understandability of the text language. Therefore, in the process of translation, the translator must first understand the translation requirements, accurately locate the communicative function of the translation, and finally

determine the corresponding translation strategy according to the purpose of the translation, the content of the original text and the communicative function of the translation, and give full play to the translation advantages, not limited to the original expression, so that the language of the translation can achieve the same effect as the original language, thus achieving the purpose of translation. However, the functional equivalence in translation is not absolute, and sometimes the original text and the translation function are inconsistent due to a special need. At this time, Nord's "transfer function of different functions" can be used to make the translation "acquire the functional effects of the approximate source language." (Jia Wenbo, 2004).

Example 3: 旅客登记时, 须凭足以证明本人身份的有效证件, 并说明住宿原因。旅客必须遵守宾馆饭店的规章制度, 服从工作人员的管理, 爱护饭店的公共财物。对违反上述规定的旅客, 饭店有权责成改正。

Reference translation: Please help us to speed up your check-in by presenting your ID. Our guests are kindly expected to heed the rules and regulations. Your cooperation will be appreciated in making our service effective. (Liu Meihua, 2009)

Obviously, the original text belongs to a text that has both information function and servant function, and its purpose is to inform and remind the passengers of the relevant regulations. In the choice of translation strategy, the translator did not use the literal translation method, but reduced some of the content according to the communicative function of the translation, and rewrote the second and third points of the original text, so that the translation achieved a good communication effect.

Example 4: 象山夜月: 广西桂林的象鼻山下有个水月洞, 江水从洞中横贯而过, 若乘小舟缓缓驶入水月洞, 便见"水底有明月, 水上浮明月, 水流月不去, 月去水还流"的绝妙景观。

Reference translation: The Water-Moon Cave, where the water flows through, is located in the Elephant Trunk Hill, Guangxi. When visitors go into the cave by boat, they can enjoy the silent moon in the running water. (Jia Wenbo, 2004)

The original text is a Chinese advertisement with a very obvious "calling" function, which is intended to stimulate the reader's enjoyment and aesthetic resonance, in line with the Chinese expression habits. The main function of the translation is to transmit information. Therefore, the translator adopts the "different function translation method" of functional translation theory, which cuts off the expression of emotional bursts, and appropriately rewrites the original text so that the translation achieves the expected function and realizes the intended purpose of the translation.

IV. THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL BACKGROUND ON THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TRANSLATION CONTENT

Functional translation theory regards translation as a purposeful cultural transformation activity. Therefore, translation should not only analyze the communication function of the original text and the translation, but also consider the cultural background of the translation, and then analyze and reconstruct the structure and content of the text.

Since the functions of the source language text and the target language text cannot be completely equal, and most of the texts are mainly functional and have other functions. When the source text context and the target language text are inconsistent, the translation should be based on the translation requirements, Priority is given to the expected function of the translation and the expectations of the reader. The original text is boldly processed and even rewritten, and the translation form and content are reconstructed to achieve the intended purpose and communication function.

Example 5: 有人说, 唐装有一种"浓妆淡抹总相宜"的气质。唐装是简约的也是复杂的。简单时它可以全无装饰, 通身连续折都少之又少; 繁杂起来却又可以有无数讲究, 并且变化无穷; 腰收还是放, 袖窄一点还是宽一点, 立领还是无领, 领子高一些还是低一些。

Reference translation: Chinese clothes suit anyone. They can be simply or elaborately cut, with a tight waist, loose or narrow cuffs, and wide or erect collars, high or low collars, or none at all. (Jia Wenbo, 2007)

Due to the different expectations and reading habits of Chinese and English readers and the understanding of the common environment of language, the translator rewrote the original text according to the cultural context and style of the target language, reduced some of the content and adjusted the word order. The translation becomes smooth and natural, achieving a good communication effect. This is actually a cultural interpretation of the text based on semantic cultural interpretation. The cultural interpretation of the text is particularly important in applied translation. It can be seen that in the practice of applied translation, the translator should fully consider the factors involved in cultural transformation and communicative interaction, break the shackles of the language level, select the appropriate translation strategy, reconstruct the form and content of the translation, and make the translation achieve the intended communication purpose and functions.

Example 6: 除了国际大都会的繁华, 香港还有很多不同的面貌, 例如原居民文化, 殖民地建筑和露天市场等。走出市区, 也可找到自然风光: 踏着绵软的沙滩, 投入蓝天碧海的怀抱; 沿登山径, 深入浓密的山林, 满目清晰……初来乍到, 您可能会惊异于香港拥有如此迷人的自然美。

Reference translation: Hong Kong is a city of stunning contrasts where towering sky scrapers rub shoulders with ancient temples and historic monuments. It's a living fusion of East and West that sees local people practicing age-old tai chi exercises in front of one of the world's most stunning harbors. (Chen Xiaowei, 2004)

After reading the original text, the original text greatly infiltrates the author's own emotions, feelings and opinions. He uses the words beautiful and colorful, and is accustomed to exaggerating the real scene to express the atmosphere. It is just like "View mountain is feeling full in mountain, watching the sea is feeling overflowing sea. If the translator uses literal translation to translate the text, the translation will inevitably appear to be cumbersome, unbearable, and lose the expected function of attracting foreign tourists. Considering that the original function is focused on introducing the beautiful tourist scenery of Hong Kong and aiming to attract foreign tourists, the translator chose the

information of interest to the tourists, cut down some of the contents, and rewrote the original text to effectively express the persuasion function of translation.

V. CONCLUSION

In summary, functional translation theory has a strong guiding role in applied translation. In the application translation practice, the translator can select the multi-information in the source text according to the translation requirements; according to the specific function of the text, select the appropriate translation strategy and method, according to the cultural background of the translation, the translation content and form Refactoring so that the translation achieves the desired communicative purpose and function.

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