

Code-switching and Translation: Taking Literary Text as an Example

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Abstract. In linguistics, language, register, dialect, and slang are commonly referred to as "code." The choice of code, the conversion or mixture of codes constitutes an important part of sociolinguistics. This paper will carry out an example study on the typical code-switching in the translation of literary novels, and use the register theory of systemic functional linguistics to analyze and explain the translation texts, and put forward that the code-switching should be given full attention during the translation practice.

Keywords: code-switching; literary text; translation.

1. Introduction

The phenomenon in which the speaker (author) selects different codes according to different situations is called code-switching. Code-switching can refer to conversions between languages, such as between English and Chinese; it can also be a conversion between language variants, such as between standard and non-standard languages.

The linguist Ronald Wardhaugh believes that code-switching is not a random, purposeless linguistic phenomenon, but a choice made by the speaker with a communicative purpose. The linguist Gumperz divides the code conversion into three categories for the reasons that occur. The first type is context-based code-switching, in which the speaker changes the code according to the occasion. The second type is conversational code-switching, in which the speaker performs code-switching within a sentence. In some cases, it may even be converted multiple times. But no change in the scene during the conversion process will result in a change in the topic. The third type of code-switching is metaphorical code-switching. This code-switching is mostly intentional. The speaker's code-switching is based on some motivation, in order to achieve a certain purpose [1, 2]. Generalized code-switching includes not only language, but also dialects, article styles, genres, and so on. The code in this study is limited to language, and the code-switching discussed below is the code-switching between different languages in the same session. The translationist Holmes has pointed out that the description and interpretation of translation phenomena is an important goal of translation studies [3]. Code-switching generally involves more than two languages, which is a special language phenomenon, and the translation of code-switching rarely attracts the attention of researchers. This paper will carry out an example study on the translation of the code-switched translation in the text, analyze and interpret the two translation methods, and explore how to better reproduce the original text.

2. Code-switching is Important for Translation

Achieving correct code-switching has an important role in conveying the original intention of the author and better understanding the text. For example, the word "billion" refers to "1,000,000,000,000" in British English, "1,000,000,000" in American English, British "first floor" refers to "second floor" in American English; "corn" in British English means "grain"; while in the US, it refers to "maize"; "cocky" is used as an adjective in standard English, meaning "arrogant," but in Australian English it can be used as a noun, meaning "petty farmer". "Tea" in Australian English can mean "dinner", and in American proverbs it can mean "marijuana". To this end, before the translator can start the translation, the translator must first confirm which language code is used in

the original text, and then prepare reference books or the online verification according to the actual situation.

3. Case Analyses

The two works of *Sunrise and Fortress Besieged* (Wei Cheng) are relatively similar, and both authors use code-switching in their works. George Zhang (张乔治) and Jimmy Zhang (张吉民) are typical figures in the two works. Both have a special foreign-related background: George was an American student. Jimmy has been doing business in Citibank, USA for more than 20 years. The feature is that there are foreign languages in Chinese; they all like to be called in their English names: "George" and "Jimmy", and the Chinese names of the two are also Chinese transliterations of English names. Through this creation, the author embodies a common feature of the two characters, that is, both of them like to display their distinctive identity and status in this way. They are all examples of metaphorical code-switching.

3.1 The Analysis of Code-switching in *Sunrise*

In *Sunrise*, George Zhang used 20 times of code-switching in the conversation, including 19 times of English-Chinese code-switching and one French-Chinese code-switching. In the English translation version, the author translates Chinese into English, making the previous model disappeared. So the only French-Chinese code-switching is converted into French-Chinese code conversion:

Example 1:

ST: 张乔治 (远远望见左门里面的刘小姐, 老远就伸出手, 一边走着, 高声嚷着 *Bonjour, bonjour, mademoiselle!* 摇着手) ——哦, 我的刘小姐.... [4]

TT: GEORGY (catching sight of Miss Liu at a distance through the open door, he goes across, his hand already extended, exclaiming loudly): *Bonjour, bonjour, mademoiselle.* (With a wave of greeting) –Ah, my dear Miss Liu. [ibid]

In the English translation, 5 of the original English-Chinese code-switching disappeared, such as:

ST: 张乔治 ... 这世界上只有陈白露才配嫁给George Chang呢!”[ibid]

TT: GEORGY ... “The only person in this world who’s worthy of George Zhang is Chen Bailu!” [ibid]

Such translation is not perfect, because the code-switching of the original text is not reflected. In the original text, George Chang was given status in China in that era through his use of English. The disappearance of code-switching will weaken the feature of the character. George Zhang changed to GEORGE ZHANG and used the form of an annotation to remind readers of English-speaking countries. This George is a "Chinese George", retaining the code-switching effect of the original text at one time.

The English embedded parts of the remaining 14 code-switching are all translated into French, so the conversion of these English and Chinese codes in the original text is all converted into English and French code-switching, such as:

Example 2:

ST: 张乔治 (一步三摇地走近白露,灵感忽然附了体) 哦! 我的小露露.(上下打量着白露,指手画脚,仿佛吟诗一样) *So beautiful! So charming! And so melancholic!*[ibid]

TT: GEORGY (going unsteadily and erratically across to Bailu, the spirit suddenly moving him) : Ah! My little Lulu! (Looking her up and down and gesticulating, as if declaiming a poem)*Si belle! Si charmante! Et sit melancolique!* [ibid]

According to the systematic-functional grammar, the form is the embodiment of meaning. [5] If this form is missing, the corresponding meaning is incomplete. Therefore, the translator chooses to reserve the form of the original code-switching when dealing with it, and translates the English-Chinese code-switching in to an English-French one. This is because French had a considerable influence on the whole of Europe in the 17th-19th centuries. It was a symbol of status. Therefore,

through this approach, readers from English-speaking countries can easily understand the intention of the author.

3.2 The Analysis of Code-switching in *Fortress Besieged* (Wei Cheng)

In *Fortress Besieged*, Jimmy Zhang's conversation reflected 19 code-switches in the conversation, all of which were English-Chinese code-switching. In the English translation, the translator retains the English embedded part of all code-switching, but it is expressed in italics in a special font. (Since I cannot find the special font of the original text, so I only used italics to show the difference of the words, which means they were actually said by a Chinese and other parts were translated, not the original words):

Example 3:

ST: "Sure! 值不少钱呢,Plenty of dough.并且这东西部比书画.买书画买了假的,一文不值,只等于waste paper.....[6]

TT: "Sure! Worth quite a lot of money, plenty of dough. Besides, these things aren't like calligraphy or paintings. If you buy calligraphy or paintings which turn out to be fake, they aren't worth a cent. They just amount to wastepaper. ""[7]

Moreover, the translator specifically mentioned in the preface that the words in the text are expressed in the original Chinese text, so although it is not directly changed to another language, the reason is explained in the preface. Can achieve the effect of the original code conversion.

3.3 The Analysis of Code-switching in the *Joy Luck Club*

The *Joy Luck Club* is the debut of Chinese-American woman writer Amy Tan. The novel depicts the twists and turns of the four women who migrated from China to China on the eve of liberation, and their emotional conflicts with their American-born daughters. The author writes in English and carefully arranges a large number of Chinese phonetic symbols to convey specific communicative intentions. The language phenomenon of alternating English and Chinese codes in the same text becomes a major language feature of the book. A case of code-switching was analyzed, in this case Waverly Jong rumored to tell her mother Lindo Jong herself and Rich about the upcoming marriage:

Example 4:

I said in a hoarse voice. "I wanted to talk to you. I wanted to tell you.. Rich and I are getting married."

I squeezed my eyes shut, waiting to hear her protests, her laments, the dry voice delivering some sort of painful verdict.

"Jrdaule"—I already know this—she said, as if to ask why I was telling her this again. [8]

Here, the mother uses the Chinese code "Jrdaule" to emphasize her power and status as a mother, and to broaden the emotional distance between her mother and daughter, which opens the curtain of the literary battle between the mother and the daughter. "Jrdaule" is a metaphorical weight. Conversion, expressing multiple meanings: First, dissatisfied with the daughter to underestimate their own judgment; second, show off their keen insight and foresight; third, against this marriage. Therefore, translated as “ ‘我早知道了.’她只是很平静地说,好像很奇怪为什么我还要再跟她说一声.” [9] failed to accurately convey the changes in the mother's attitude, the mother is not at the moment Calm, but the dissatisfaction of the marriage is about to erupt, it should be translated as: “我早知道了!” 母亲不耐烦地说.

4. Summary

It can be seen from the above cases that the code-switching in the literary text is the result of careful arrangement by the author and can play a key role in enriching the characters' images. Therefore, in the process of literary text translation, the translator should not neglect the code-switching of the source text, and should use appropriate methods to convey the originality of the source text and the effect of shaping the characters.

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