

Research on Chinese-English Translation Compensation Based on Cognitive Linguistics

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Abstract

The two languages involved in translation reflect their respective real world and cognitive styles, the different idealized cognitive models and background knowledge of the original and target readers cause the translatability limit and the cognitive blind spots of the target readers, therefore, there is objective necessity to compensate for the missing information. Chinese-English translators should adhere to the principle of relevance and consistency in accordance with their overall translation strategies and readers' cognitive analysis, and implement appropriate external compensation and internal compensation for the translation at the sentence and text levels to help comprehensive conversion of original meaning and improve the readability of the translation. From the perspective of cognitive perspective, Chinese-English translation compensation is studied in this paper. Considering the different educational backgrounds of the target readers, a lot of information will be missed when reading the translation, therefore, the translation compensation is particularly important. Through appropriate compensation for information, translators can integrate the reader's cognitive world with the cognitive world constructed by the translation, thereby promoting understanding of the translation.

Keywords

Cognitive linguistics; Chinese-English; translation compensation.

1. Introduction

In the 1990s, many cognitive linguists began to expand from the study of words and sentences to the discourse level, expanded the scope of cognitive linguistics research. Compared with the relationship between the original text and the original readers, the generation and understanding of the target texts are more closely related to the social practice and cognition of the target readers. The translator should fully consider the cognitive foundation when the target readers understand the translated text, and adopt appropriate translation strategies and methods accordingly to achieve the purpose of translation and intercultural communication. Translation compensation is one of the commonly used translation methods. Although translation compensation has long been applied in practice, the research on translation compensation generally lags behind. In the late 1980s, scholars began to define the concept of translation compensation in a more rigorous way. In recent years, some scholars have discussed the issue of translation compensation from different perspectives; however, studying the issue of translation compensation from the perspective of cognitive linguistics is still a new exploration. The actual life experience and cognitive ability of the target reader are related to the formation and understanding of the translated text. When translating, translators should consider the target reader's existing understanding level for the translation. Translation compensation expands the field for improving translation. This paper first explores the

discourse perspective of cognitive linguistics, then analyzes the importance of translation compensation, and finally proposes methods of translation compensation.

2. Discourse View of Cognitive Linguistic

From the perspective of cognitive function, discourse is considered as element of semantic unit and must have the characteristics of semantic coherence. Discourse is generally defined as a group of sentences that have the characteristics of compositional response, index of proposition development, smooth sentences and usefulness. Therefore, the target readers can unify the cognitive world; thereby the translated information is mentally linked and promotes understanding. Although the link in form is important, it is more important to achieve link in semantic content and mentality.

Semantics are related conceptual content that can be activated by the mind, as well as cognition and understanding attached to it. Semantics is based on cognition and conceptual structure, and it is closely related to human subjective factors, so that people reach consensus at the understanding level and have the characteristics of subject. Discourse coherence is related to the formation of discourse meaning, different languages have different background differences, when studying discourse coherence, and we must pay attention to the reference of background knowledge.

From the perspective of cognitive function, discourse is a semantic unit and must have semantic coherence. From the perspective of cognitive function, discourse can be described as: a group of sentences that can form a meaningful whole, has the applicability of conceptual components, the index of proposition development, and the adaptability of pragmatic inference, Such a whole can ensure that the activated information is mentally linked, can form a unified cognitive world, and make the discourse coherent. Formal cohesion is not the only condition for forming textual coherence, the semantic content and mental coherence of texts are the necessary conditions for determining textual coherence, namely a group of sentences constitutes text. Therefore, the analysis of discourse coherence, generation and comprehension should be based on deeper cognitive world perspective in order to make a more reasonable explanation.

Cognitive linguistics opposes the objective semantic view and insists on the experiential, subjective, dynamic and interactive nature of semantics. Moreover, it believes that semantics is based on human cognition and conceptual structure and cannot be separated from human subjective factors. It is a consensus reached through mutual understanding. Idealized cognitive model is a concept put forward by cognitive linguistics for objective semantic theory. The idealized cognitive model is the abstract, unified and idealized understanding of the speaker's experience and knowledge in a certain field under the specific cultural background; it is a complex and integrated structure based on many cognitive models and a complex cognitive model. There are different degrees of adaptation and hierarchical relationships between idealized cognitive model and the objective world. Based on experience philosophy and idealized cognitive model theory, and dynamic method, Wang Yin proposes a cognitive world analysis method of discourse coherence, which combines several basic cognitive methods of experience, activation, salience and prototype category adopted in cognitive linguistics at the level of analyzing words and sentences. Cognitive world is all kinds of knowledge formed by people's cognitive processing on the basis of experience, which is stored in people's mind. The cognitive world is divided into idealized cognitive model and background knowledge according to universality, representativeness and idealization. The distinction between them depends on many factors, and also varies from person to place. The boundary is fuzzy, there is interaction between them. The background knowledge that is generally accepted by the community can become idealized cognitive model. The idealized cognitive model has universality, regularity and typicality. Background knowledge is specific detailed knowledge, not necessarily universal

and representative, including some specific content, which will vary from person to person, from time to time, from place to place, which can be already known by both sides of the communication, or just learned in the current communication. They may often change in the specific language communication, in the dynamic, constantly enrich, strengthen, adjust and even change the background knowledge of both sides of the conversation and the current communication situation.

The acquisition of textual meaning depends on textual coherence. According to Husserl and Heidegger, meaning is the combination of background knowledge and textual information. The background knowledge acquired by language users is very important to the coherence of idioms, so the analysis of discourse coherence must rely on background knowledge. For members of the same language community, the actual use of language has economic characteristics, so there is information missing in language expression. According to the cognitive world analysis method, people mainly rely on the information provided by the text and their internal knowledge of the cognitive world, combine with the context, supplement relevant information, find the reference relationship between the conceptual components of the context through the activation mechanism, and strive to seek the development line of the proposition, so as to obtain the adaptability of pragmatic reasoning, so that the text can establish a unified mental in the cognitive world, there is continuity and coherence between discourses, and people can understand the whole discourse. Among the members of the same language community, when they understand the literal information, they always treat it in a certain cognitive world. When a new text conflicts with the original cognitive structure, there will be cognitive imbalance. The receiver will start from his related cognitive world, solve the cognitive conflict through assimilation and adaptation, and finally achieve a higher state of cognition. If the information provided by the text can establish a unified and acceptable cognitive world in the reader's mind through the activation mechanism, the reader can use idealized cognitive model and background knowledge to construct the integrity of the meaning of the text, make appropriate supplement to the missing information, so as to obtain the coherence of the text, so as to understand the text.

3. Significance of Chinese-English Translation Information Compensation

Translation is the act of turning information from one language into another on the basis of accuracy and smoothness. Authors, translators, and readers are involved in the translation process. The original readers and the target readers have a lot in common in the thinking, but there are great differences in language, culture, and living environment. The target reader will inevitably miss a lot of information when reading the translation, but the reader's ability to compensate the information is limited. Therefore, it is particularly necessary for the translators to make appropriate compensation for the translation information. The translators can make predictions based on the background knowledge of the target readers, so as to compensate the translation appropriately, so that the target readers can read the original content.

A fundamental point of cognitive linguistics is that there is a sequential relationship among reality-cognition-language. Cognitive linguistics believes that meaning is equivalent to experience-based conceptualization, and semantics is equivalent to related conceptual content that can be activated in the mind and the understanding that is added to it. Translation is an intercultural communication process based on multiple interactions involving cognitive subjects such as authors, translators, and readers. The thinking of the original and target readers share some common characteristics, it results in translatability between the two languages, but both belong to different linguistic societies, have different national cultures, living environments, customs, and mutual recognition. The way of knowing is also very different. The two language communities faced their respective real worlds and formed their

own languages through perception and cognition of reality. The two languages reflected different real worlds and understandings, so the idealized cognitive model and background knowledge of members of both communities were somewhat different, this leads to the limitation of translatability and the cognitive blind spot of the target readers. For the target readers, the original text presents a different cognitive world and a large amount of missing information, which are not all supplemented by the reader's own idealized cognitive model and background knowledge. If the text information of the translated text is not clear, the communication or function expected by the translator may not be realized, and even misunderstanding may occur. Therefore, there is an objective necessity for compensation in translation.

The translator has a dual identity. He is a reader first, but unlike ordinary readers, he has a proper grasp of the two languages and cultures involved in translation, and are able to understand the target of translation. As for the translatability of cultural differences, it depends on the translator's cultural literacy and language skills, as well as the translator's wisdom and subjective initiative. In translation, when the translator uses the target language to express his or her cognitive understanding of the original text, the way of expression is restricted by the idealized cognitive model and background knowledge of the target reader in the target culture he predicts, so he must exert creativity and subjective initiative. This subject consciousness of the translator is subject to the principle of "faithfulness", that is, the intention of the original author and the original text. The translator should consider the interaction between the translation and the target readers, so it must be limited. The degree of compensation is based on his predictions of the target reader's idealized cognitive model and background knowledge. The translator should fully translate the objective and cognitive world that the original text intends to express, and the target reader can restore the translated information to the objective and cognitive world reflected by the original text based on his own understanding by reading the translation. Although the transparent translation between different cultures is "absolutely impossible", by compensating the target readers for their lack of idealized cognitive model and background knowledge, readers can construct their own cognitive world when reading the target text Understand the translation text.

4. Definition of Translation Information Compensation

Translation compensation research is still in its infancy. There is still a lack of a relatively uniform and widely accepted definition of translation compensation, reflecting the lagging state of translation compensation research. The definition of compensation in academia has gone through a process from vague to clear. Most researchers value compensation based on the principle of equivalence of semantics or communicative function. Different scholars have different research focuses, and there are differences in the definition of compensation. Three types of views can be distinguished by studying relevant materials. One view is that compensation is only related to specific stylistic and aesthetic rhetoric, and mainly involves puns, allusions, language conversion of phonetic effects, and compensation of aesthetic elements. Another view equates translation almost free translation. The former of the two seems to be too narrow in defining compensation, while the latter is too broad and is a broad definition. The third point of view is that translation compensation includes additions, deletions, fusion, decomposition, interpretation, transplantation, borrowing and translation, and rhetorical compensation. No special discussion has been found to define translation compensation from the perspective of cognitive linguistics.

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, the understanding and translation of individual words and sentences in a discourse cannot be separated from the overall function and cognitive analysis of the discourse. The meaning of the partial words and sentences to be understood

exists in the discourse, so the translation has discourse. Sex, translation compensation should also be analyzed from the perspective of text. This article attempts to define translation compensation from the perspective of cognitive linguistics as follows: In order to avoid the lack of information when the target reader interprets the translation due to the differences between the original language and the language and culture of the target language, it is not conducive to the realization of the intended translation purpose or effect. The process of making up for the lack of information properly inside or outside the text, and uniting the cognitive world of the target reader and the cognitive world of the translation expression. For the classification of compensation, different scholars have also adopted different classification standards and methods. Taking cognition as the standard, translation compensation involves two categories: idealized cognitive model-related compensation and background knowledge-related compensation. However, the differences in idealized cognitive model and background knowledge between the original and target readers are difficult to fully describe. The right of this article divides the compensation methods into internal translation and external compensation according to the space standard. The former is compensation at the sentence and text levels within the translation. The latter is the compensation made outside the translation. It belongs to the discourse level, including the translation of the entire translation, the original author, etc., appendixes, prefaces added by the translator, etc., and footnotes added to a certain word in the translation Or endnotes. Both types of compensation involve idealized cognitive model compensation and background knowledge compensation. Under the premise of fully cognizing the spirit of the original text, translators can properly implement compensation methods to help readers realize the cognitive interpretation of the target text based on their own cognitive world, and may gain new background knowledge and even construct new idealized cognitive model, and expand one's cognitive world.

5. Compensation Method of Translation Information

Information compensation, in order to avoid the missing information when the target reader reads the translation, the translator will compensate the translation appropriately at the time of translation, so that the reader's cognitive world is consistent with the translation world expressed by the translation. Information compensation consists of internal compensation and external compensation. Internal compensation is compensation for the content of the translation; external compensation is compensation for things outside the content of the translation, mainly including: author's note; the overall content of the translation. Information compensation mainly includes: compensation at the conceptual level, structural level, and stylistic rhetoric.

Under the premise of grasping the general concept of the original text, translators add real words to the translation to enrich the original translation. We often classify background compensation as conceptual compensation. In other words, information compensation for the names of people, places, allusions and other factors in the translation will help readers better understand the translation. To meet the language expression habits of the target, the translation needs to add necessary structure words and transition words. In addition, in Chinese-English translation, information compensation should be performed after the structure of the language has changed. For example, when the Chinese information is arranged in a sequential order, the primary and secondary are not clear enough. If it is only translated into English mechanically, it will be difficult for the reader to understand and recognize the sentence. The use of rhetoric is to make the language more vivid and to enhance the expressiveness and appeal of language. Both English and Chinese have a long history and both have rich rhetoric. Due to the different cultural backgrounds of East and West, the rhetorical format of English and Chinese languages is consistent and different. Stylistic rhetoric

compensation considers the "elegance" of English translations, mainly involving mood words and modal words.

From the perspective of the translation process, the loss and compensation have multi-period characteristics, but the compensation is ultimately reflected in the translation. When implementing compensation, the translator makes prediction analysis on the target reader in terms of idealized cognitive model and background knowledge, and then makes predictions on the target reader's perception of the translation. According to his overall translation strategy, the necessity of compensation, appropriate selection of compensation methods for appropriate compensation to avoid randomness. Regarding the principle of compensation, scholars put forward the six principles of demand, relevance, emphasis, proximity, and other functions. The author believes that it can be integrated into related principles and consistent principles. Relevant principles require compensation for the greatest correlation between content and form and translation efficacy, purpose, or function, while consistency principles require compensation for system to achieve consistency in the overall style or function of the translation. For internal compensation, translators cannot arbitrarily promote explanatory materials in the text of the translation, resulting in excess compensation. The extension of the translation has obvious limits; all that can be added in the translation is the "subtext" in the original, which cannot add cultural information that does not exist in the original. External compensation should also be based on necessity and appropriateness. Liu Yiqing proposed four norms on translation supplementation, which should help the comprehensive conversion of meaning; help to the appropriate optimization of language structure; help to improve the readability of the target language moderately; And the aesthetic participation of the recipient. These specifications can also be used to constrain compensation at the word, sentence, and text levels.

In practice, sentences are the basic unit of translation, and word translation is generally handled within the context of the sentence. Therefore, compensation for words can be classified at the sentence level. Discourse is the overall processing unit of the translation. There is a circular and interactive relationship in the expression process. The construction of target texts should also be carried out at two levels: sentence and text. Due to the difference in the losses between English-Chinese and Chinese-English translation, this article only analyzes translation compensation from the perspective of Chinese-English translation.

Sentence-level compensation is internal compensation, involving both idealized cognitive model and background knowledge. The original sentence information is mainly distributed on three levels: (substance), (structure), and (style). Information compensation can be implemented on three levels. For the extra-textual annotations of the entire sentence or the words in the sentence, this article classifies them into the discourse level compensation. Based on a comprehensive grasp of the meaning of the original text, the translator fully interprets the original intent by adding expressions based on real words or habitual expressions. The background knowledge is to properly interpret the names, place names, allusions, and political, religious, customary and other Chinese historical and cultural knowledge in the translation to compensate for the missing information and help the translation readers obtain the necessary background knowledge to achieve the translation. For the compensated translation, readers can realize the cognitive interpretation of the translated text based on their own cognitive world, and may gain new background knowledge, and even construct a new idealized cognitive model, thereby expanding their own cognitive world.

Structural compensation mainly involves idealized cognitive model compensation, so that the translation conforms to the English syntactic structure. According to the English expression habits, add the necessary components of the sentence, add structural words, omitted words in the original, collocations, transition words, etc., which also involves compensation caused by grammatical category conversion. The author believes that the conversion from typical Chinese

conformal structure to English conformal structure in Chinese-English syntactic conversion also belongs to idealized cognitive model compensation. The information in Chinese is arranged linearly, and the gods gather together. The English translation has a clear hierarchy of primary and secondary information, and clear grammatical and semantic relationships, which make readers clear at a glance. If translating into parallel structure sentences regardless of the semantic relationship between the information, it is likely that the reader will have difficulty grasping the primary and secondary information of the sentence accurately.

Stylistic rhetorical compensation: This compensation is mainly for the compensation of idealized cognitive model and background information based on the rhetorical, logical, and aesthetic considerations of the translation. Rhetorical compensation involves the processing of some special rhetorical means, such as puns and rest words; homophones, and additional translations of mood words, modal words, etc. The logical compensation makes the translation conform to the writing logic and enhances the persuasiveness.

Discourse-level compensation has both external and internal compensation, which also involves both idealized cognitive model and background knowledge. Discourse external compensation is as described above. Nida believes that there are two main ways to add annotations: notes that explain specific historical and cultural occasions, which are usually placed on the same page as the thing being explained, and notes that describe general issues, usually as an appendix after the text. [2] This compensation helps readers understand the original author and works, the language and culture of the original, the translator and the translated information, and thus helps the cognitive interpretation of the translation. Internal discourse compensation includes transposition compensation, fusion compensation, and decomposition compensation, etc. Translators can flexibly grasp the position of compensation according to the principle of moderate, relevant, and consistent compensation. Internal compensation also includes adding words between translated sentences to strengthen inter-sentence cohesion, semantic coherence, writing logic, and adding explanatory or background sentences or even paragraphs within the text. The latter compensation is common in textual translations that contain unique cultural information. Discourse level information compensation should be based on the translator's prediction of the target reader's idealized cognitive model and background knowledge, and pursue the overall style and effect of the target text.

Based on the discourse perspective of cognitive linguistics, this paper discusses the cognitive linguistic basis of translation compensation and the issue of Chinese-English translation compensation in the process of target text generation. In order to avoid communication obstacles caused by lack of information when the target reader interprets the translation in translation practice, it is necessary to properly compensate the information in the translation to unify the reader's cognitive world with the cognitive world expressed by the translation, so as to understand based on their own cognitive world Translate texts, and possibly gain new background knowledge, and even construct new idealized cognitive model to expand the cognitive world. Chinese-English translators need to predict their idealized cognitive model and background knowledge based on their overall translation strategy and target audience. Adhere to the principle of relevant and consistent compensation, and moderately compensate externally and internally the translation at the sentence and text levels to help the full conversion of the original meaning and the appropriate optimization of the language structure of the translation to improve the readability of the English translation Make the target reader better realize the cognitive interpretation of the translation.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, the existence of information compensation in Chinese-English translation makes up for the shortcomings of the original translation, avoids the information missing of the target readers when understanding the original text, and makes the readers to understand the translated text faster and better. However, it should be noted that in translation compensation, we should also respect the content of the original text and grasp the compensation methods.

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