A Study on Interpretation Skills Based on Explicitation

-- A Case Study of the Interpretation of Foreign Ministry Leaders' Speeches

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Abstract

Explicitation refers to making the original unclear semantics or structure more obvious and easy to understand. In 1958, French scholars Vinay and Darbelnet first proposed the explicitation of interpretation, believing that the explicitation is to express the hidden information of the original text in a clearer way, but did not make a more specific definition. Later scholars further expanded the connotation of explicitation through case analysis and corpus research. This paper aims to analyze the explicit strategy in diplomatic speech to facilitate the application of this strategy in interpreting practice. It selects several speeches by leaders of the Ministry of foreign affairs, which are more authoritative and representative.

Keywords

Interpretation Skill; Explicitation; Diplomatic Speech.

1. Introduction

Explicitation is one of the universal features of interpretation. Explicitation usually refers to "a interpretation strategy that clarifies the information implied in the source language in the target language" (Klaudy, 2009). In the application of any language, the relationship between some sentences is explicit and the other is implicit. However, if one language is interpreted into another language, the interpreter needs to clarify the implied sentence content and relationship in the source language according to the language and cultural habits of the target language. Liu Zequan (2008) pointed out that the causes of explicitation are ideology, interpretation norms, differences in the level of interpreters and so on. Ke Fei (2005) proposed that the explicitation in interpretation is caused by many factors, such as language factors, social and cultural factors, interpreter factors and text factors.

2. Literature Review

In this part, literature review will be presented with mainly two sections both at home and abroad.

2.1. Previous Studies on Explicitation Abroad

Vinay and Darbelnet(1997) first proposed the concept of explicitation, which refers to the process of disambiguation of information hidden in the original text but can be judged by context. Blum Kulka(2004) put forward the "dominance hypothesis", pointing out that "the interpretation process will prolong the interpretation time, mainly because the interpreter shows a certain degree of coherence in the interpretation process." It also holds that the interpreter's interpretation of the original text leads to the emergence of dominance. Later, Seguinot questioned Blum Kulka's view that the definition of "explicit hypothesis" is quite narrow, and length is only a manifestation of explicit phenomenon.For example, if there is no

annotation information in the original text, it can be regarded as implicit information or understood through explicit assumptions by emphasizing the selected vocabulary. It also shows an obvious phenomenon. Seguinot's research(1988) broke through the limitations of explicit research and extended the explicit research of discourse coherence to the comparative research in interpretation. Mona Baker applied the corpus based research paradigm to the study of interpretation commonality, and proposed that "compared with some original texts and the whole original texts, the visibility of interpretation has been greatly improved".

2.2. Previous Studies on Explicitation at Home

Chinese scholar Wang Kefei(2003) was the first to study the explicitation in English-Chinese and Chinese-English interpretation. Based on the research of corpus, he found the explicitation of the interpretation, which confirmed the explicitation phenomenon. Since then, the method of using corpus to analyze various phenomena in interpretation has attracted the attention of many domestic scholars and achieved certain results, such as Hu Kaibao, Tao Qing(2009). The study of interpretation universality based on corpus has become a unique research field and a new perspective of interpretation studies. However, Hou Yu(2016), after sorting out the empirical research results of explicit and implicit interpretation, found that the research in this field is "still mainly focused on translation, and not much on interpretation".

3. Analysis of Explicit Strategies in Diplomatic Speech

3.1. The Addition of Cultural Information

Due to different social and cultural factors, interpreters may need to add some information in the interpretation.

Example 1

As an old Chinese saying goes, "Great truth meets the aspiration of all." China is ready to work with other countries to apply the vision of win-win cooperation, write new chapters in international relations in the 21st century, and create a brighter future of dignity, progress and security to be enjoyed by all.

Example 2

Traditionally, the Spring Festival season ends with the Lantern Festival which falls on the 15th of the first lunar month. The Lantern Festival has been the great occasion to display and watch lanterns since antiquity. A poet of the Song Dynasty wrote these lines, "The sky is ablaze with myriads of fish-shaped lanterns. It is fun everywhere on the Lantern Festival. Lanterns in shape of horse, lion, dragon and human figure are all attractive. Streets and lanes are packed with singing and dancing children."

Due to the extensive and profound traditional Chinese culture, interpreters inevitably have to add some information when interpreting ancient poems to make them readable and modern.

3.2. The Addition of Logical Connectives

Logical connectives represent the logical relationship between sentences, which can include cause and effect, turning point, purpose, concession and hypothesis. Due to the "implicit" characteristics of Chinese and the "explicit" characteristics of English, interpreters can express some contents more logically and easily understood by flexibly and reasonably using these conjunctions. Therefore, the frequency of using logical connectives greatly affects the degree of explicitation of sentences.

Example 3

In 2015, we conducted a special survey nationwide of 26million registered persons with disabilities, and collected detailed information about their conditions and their needs.

Example 4

This forum takes as its theme "China and the Asian Century", which gives full expression to the widespread interest in the prospects of development in China and Asia as a whole, as well as in the impact of their development on global economic growth.

Example 5

I believe that more opportunities will be created for foreign businesspeople to participate in the development of China's central and western regions with the accelerating trend of globalization. Consequently, greater space will be created for the development of China's central and western regions.

Example 6

Meanwhile, African leaders have forcefully refuted the so-called "new colonialism" by China in Africa, and have highly appreciated China policy towards Africa. In addition, President Xi Jinping visited Mexico and two other Latin American countries this year. During the trip, he signed 24 cooperation documents.

Example 7

In addition to their vast land, diverse culture and diligent people,China and India are also seeing their economies on a fast-growth track.

In the above example sentences, some logical connectives are not directly used in Chinese sentences, and their internal logical relations are hidden between sentences or can be deduced according to the context. Due to this "implicit" feature of Chinese sentences, in the above examples of English interpretation of diplomatic speeches, interpreters respectively use conjunctions such as "and", "as well as", "consequently", "meanwhile" and "in addition" to express the implicit logical relationship between sentences, so that the relationship between sentences is clear at a glance and convenient for the audience to understand.

3.3.   Alteration or Synonym Replacement

Example 8

Today we are here celebrating Guangxi. The Lanting Forum provides the stage. and Guangxi is the real star.

Example 9

So far, the G20 has held ten summits. This year, it is China's turn to play host.

Example 10

What it represents is the emphasis given to both the short and long-term impetus to driving growth. While continuing to use proper fiscal and monetary policies to meet the immediate challenges, priority may also be given to structural reforms as a way to unleash the medium and long term potential of growth.

In order to convey the meaning better, the interpreters change some metaphorical sentences with Chinese characteristics to express them in a clearer and understandable way.

4. Conclusion

Through the analysis of many diplomatic speeches, we can find that interpreters have adopted various methods, such as increasing cultural information, adding logical connectives, transformation or synonymous substitution. These methods effectively reduce the impact of cultural differences and language habits, and make cross-cultural communication more accurate and understandable.

In our usual interpretation practice, we should not only pay attention to the language exporter's discourse, but also put ourselves in the receiver's language habits and cultural background. Although interpretation should be accurate, it should also be flexible.

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