A Study On Times Features Of Translation In Perspective Of Translation Contradictions

Fubao Liang[1] Wen-jie Yang[2]

[1] Applied English Department, Humanity Faculty, Nanchang Vocational University, China.

[2] English Department, Guangzhou No. 5 Middle School, China.

Abstract:

There are many factors that make translating difficult, one of which is times features of translation. This paper attempts to reveal the curtain of the times features of translation, by tracing and discussing contradictions in translating. With help of documentary research method, findings are analyzed and discussed accordingly in the sequence of the inherent contradictions, which result in a conclusion of 5 aspect of times features of translation, which is expected be helpful in future translation.

Key words: *translation theory; translation contradictions; times features*

I. Introduction

In translation, both in theoretical studying and translating practice, what much attention concerned more with is the criteria and the methodology which have been being regarded as the hottest topics in this field.

Though discussed for more than a century, from the appearance of On Yan Fu's Tree Criteria of "Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance", (Shen, 1998, pp1-294) no definite conclusion comes out. It is from those discussions that something new came to: The same to thought and language, translation has its own apparent features of times, i.e., translation features of times (TFT).

Times features are of importance in translation. To say translation is difficult is, to some degree, meaning, there are so many difficult knots to untie, i.e., contradictions to resolve.(Zhong, 1996, pp1-720) In the viewpoint of times features, it is quite natural and reasonable for following mentioned contradictions; it is logical and acceptable for them to be dealt with by the stand of TFT.

II. Related Literature Review

Two parts are discussed in this part: Four stages of translation in China and Diachronic development of translation theories.

Four stages of translation in China

It refers the four historical periods of Chinese translation, (Ma Zu-yi, 2004, pp1-458) namely, the translation period of Buddhist sutras from the Eastern Han Dynasty to the Tang and Song dynasties; (Xia, 2014, pp1-406) the period of scientific and technological translation of Ming and Qing dynasties;(Bai, 2021, pp-205) the period of advanced Western thoughts and literature translation from the Opium War to the May Fourth Movement, (Xie, 2009, pp1-335）and the period of reform and opening up time up to present.（Wang, 2019, pp819-824） During each of the above mentioned four periods, there are some representatives and their typical theories, briefly listed in **Figure 2-1**

Diachronic development of translation theories

It refers to the diachronic interpretation of a translation theory. The different diachronic interpretations of a translation theory highlight the characteristics of its times. Such characteristics of the times are not only related to the theory itself, but also reflected in the related concepts concerning the source text and the target text, the textual structure, and the respective readers, which are focused on and discussed in this paper.

Times	Representatives	Main theoretical principles
Period 1	Zhi Qian	following the main text without embellishing the text
	Dao AnThe	five lost roots and three difficult ones
Period 2	Ma Jianzhong	the theory of good translation
	Yan Fu	faithfulness, faithfulness and elegance
Period 3	Lu Xun & Qu Qiubai	the smooth theory
	Fu Lei	likeness
	Qian Zhongshu	theory of the environment
Period4	Linguists and scholars	the hermeneutic turn and cultural turn against linguistic patterns

Figure 2-1 Some representatives and their main theoretical principles in the four periods of times

((Ye, 2014, pp1-396))

Conflicts in translation

In translating practice, there has come up with many unforeseen situations, out of which there are conflicts translators having come across during translation history, among which following aspects summarized in perspectives of time features are to be discussed in this paper:

1) Expressively, there has been translation conflict (TC) between the content of thought and the form of expression (Li & Sun, 2010, PP3-8) .

2) In readability, TC between translators and readers (Tu, 2013, PP110-113)

3) Bilingually, TC between languages (Liu, 2014, PP)

4) Internally, TC between the parts and the whole (Chen, 2010, PP63)

5) In mean Measure s, TC between stringent and manoeuvrable (Li,2016,PP292 to 294)

III. Research Methodology

Documentary research method is adopted in this research, whose definition and using procedures are briefly introduced as follow:

Definition

Documentary research method is a scientific method of conducting research by using previously published literature, archives, and other sources of information. (Wang,2019,pp1-266) These include books, journals, newspapers, government documents, company records, statistics, and other available sources.

Procedures

Documentary research methods is used for research in this paper by following steps

1) Research questions:

What are the contradictions in translation？

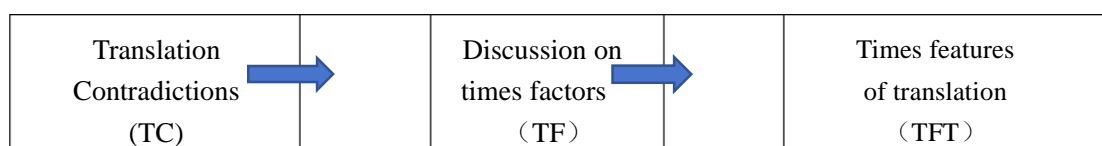How do times features work and be studied?

What are the times features of translation?

2) Collect and analyze documentary data.

3) Discuss and conclude the times features of translation.

Research tool

Following mode is employed in this research:

Translation Contradictions (TC)		Discussion on times factors （TF）		Times features of translation （TFT）

Figure 3-1   Mode of Research Tool

IV. Findings and Discussions

Five contradictions of translation (TC) are discussed in perspectives of times factor (TF), in which translation takes place, so as to look into what times features of translations (TFT) that impact on the translation. The TC inherent in translation fall under the following subheadings, sufficient discussions on which results in related TFT.

TC between the content of thought and the form of expression and its times features

Thought and language can neither be consulted from nor identified with each other, in other words, there exist contradictions and, in the meanwhile, a relation of mutual Promotion between them. They are both in antagonism and in unity. The development of thought and language, though parallel, is uneven. The former always advances ahead of the latter. The Vocabulary available can hardly meet the increasing needs of expressing the thought reflecting the ever-changing reality. This is the fundamental factor, which brings into the being said contradictions. In translation, it is not uncommon that words fall to convey the meaning in consequence of the understock of existing vocabulary.

The development of language affords ever-enlarging vocabulary to translation. In return, in the course of the elevation of the translator'"s thought, he must adjust his speech to his thought by refining the language. The process of revising the version is simultaneous with enriching the language and thought, To clarify the interrelations between them, it is necessary to distinguish between the leading and subordinate contradictions. Logically speaking, thought is content and language is a mere form. The content 一 thought 一 impersonates the leading role in the principal contradiction, while the form 一

language — acts the subordinate character. Language, both translated from and translated into, ministers, so to speak, to the thought. The principal contradiction of translation consists in the expression of the same thought in both languages concerned. Thought admits of no alternation in any case. Hence it constitutes the leading aspects of principal contradiction in both languages. Translation is to transform the leading aspect of contradiction in the language starting from into that in the language bound for. The unity resulting from struggle appears in the form of a piece of version. In the version are unified the opposites of the original thought and the new forms of expression. Hence, it is essential for a translator to locate where the leading contradiction is; or else he may put the cart before the horse, blindly seeking after the florid language and specious expressions, and thus lapsing into mistranslation or aggrandizement.

Both thought and language are products of times. As is discussed above, the original thought and the forms of expression, either in the original or in a new language, must be unified in a certain phrase of times. Tri-elements of thought, of expression and times must match one another in the original, and in a piece of version as well.

With the further development of he times, the improvement of thinking cognition and the increasing perfection of language means, it is believed that there will be translations that are much closer to the original text both in the language level and though height.

TC between translators and readers and its times features

Man is social on a certain point of times, in which the translators and readers are the same. Man can not live beyond his own time. Writer conveys his thought to original readers, translators to his version readers.

The translator transmits the thoughts to the readers in general through the medium of bilingual Expressions. This is also a process of the unity of opposites. It brings both parties into a common understanding wherein they are lacking before the completion and publication of a version. Whether a version is desirable or not depends on the extent of the contradiction between both parties is solved. To solve this contradiction, it is incumbent in a translator to unify the contradiction between content and form in order to create the conditions for the opposite party to comprehend the thoughts of translated works. On the other hand, readers must have a corresponding level of thought and exert considerable efforts in reading; otherwise, it is hardly possible to eliminate the discrepancies between translators and readers.

The role of TF is here reflected in the fact that, in the past years, with language barriers, non-native speakers did not know the works of foreign language writers; additionally, with the block of mountains and rivers preventing from knowing what the people of that language looked like and their way of life, let alone their way of thinking and emotional expression. It is the development of the times that not only make the distant world neighbour -- offering the opportunities to learn each other's language, but also make heartbeats resonate -- providing more opportunities to communicate thoughts and emotions. In such a rapid development of times context, translation readers' feelings towards the translated text will certainly be much closer to those of the original readers, and this contradiction will be effectively alleviated.

TC between languages and its times features

The similarities and individualities of languages are contradictory both in forms and in sense. A translator cannot dispense with a comparative study of languages in such respects as tense, number, flavor and style, conversation of speech, idiomatic usage of voice, amplification and inference of acceptation, commendation and derogation, sarcasm and eulogy, positive and negative manner of expression, simplification and complication of diction, ellipsis and iterance, etc. Only by eliminating their differences and retaining their similarities can the contradictions between languages be unified in translation. It is indeed no easy task for a translator to accomplish because translation is a bilingual art, which demands a translator of his

proficiency both in the language starting from and in the language bound for.

In perspective of times, diachroneity and synchroneity are features of languages. In one language diachronic features are relatively important, while in relations between two languages, taking translation for instance, however, synchronic features are more important than the other. In other word, the more t translators concern with lingual synchroneity in translating, the more it facilitates dealing with the contradiction between languages, especially, in forms and senses.

TC between the parts and the whole and its times features

Translation is a painstaking work first from the exterior to the interior and then from the interior to the exterior. "Interior"and"exterior"refer thought and languages respectively. This is not a one-way nor a parallel line ingress. The ingress and egress assume the shape of V -- something like two streaks of radioactive rays. The pointed bottom of the wedge stands for thought, and the upper two extremes thereof represent two languages. The divergence between free translation and literal translation has its origin in the misconception of V-shaped process of translation.

If the translator open up a new line between the two extremes of the wedge and travels to and fro along this line without passing the pointed bottom of the wedge, he is doomed to fall into the quagmire of formalism and mechanism. If he whirls around one extreme representing the language translated into with less communication with the other extreme and the bottom of the wedge, he is translating without regard to the original thought and will commit the error of liberalism. Mechanism is always accompanied by liberalism. Extreme and absolute mechanism is non-existent in the practice of translation, for it renders the version neither comprehensible nor readable. To redeem this deficiency, it always resorts to liberalism and invokes a helping hand therefrom. Thus mechanism and liberalism coordinate and divide the labor in translation. The former shares the responsibility for abusing the isolated working, fragmentary phrases and illogical order; and the latter, for splitting the sentences at random. Exclusively free translation turns out to be liberalism. Exclusively literal translation lapses into mechanism. Only by translating from one extreme of the wedge via its bottom to the other extreme, can we unify the contradictions between free translation and literal translation. Free translation, literal translation or free-literal translation are all utilizable on the precondition that they conform to the set criteria of rendition, while infer a ban are placed both liberalism and mechanism in translation.

In the last analysis, the error of mechanism is attributable to the predomination of one part of the original works over its whole text, and the error of liberalism is ascribable to lack of scrutiny into each part of the original and to partial stress on the whole text. They both may be traced back to the same source 一 improper handing of the contradictions between the part and the whole.

Though it is improper handling of the contradictions between the part and the whole that cause the errors both of mechanism and liberalism, these two approaches of translation can find their influences in history and at present times, which can be reflected not only in some early period of Buddhistic translation and nowadays's machine translating, but also AI translation in nearest future, respectively.

Therefore, TF in this situation witnesses both the varieties of new incredible errors caused by the improper handling of the contradictions between the part and the whole, and more new better solving methods as well.

TC between stringent and manoeuvrable and its times features

Stringent approach lies between literal translation and mechanical translation; and manoeuvrable approach, between free translation and literal translation. The former exceeds literal translation in intensity, yet it doesn't go so far as to reach the degree of mechanical translation;the later oversteps the scope of free translation, yet it keeps a certain distance from liberal translation.

Stringent Approach

As was stated by James Howell in Familiar Letters, "Some hold translations not unlike to be the wrong side of a Turkey tapestry."(Schneider,2010,PP559-574)To obviate the defect as described in a proverb, "All translators are traitors", he clung tenaciously to stringent approach. The following are questions from the advocators thereof .

(1) He is Translation? a thief that addeth more, as much as he that taketh from the store of the first author. (Andrew Marvell)

(2) The hero in Homer's poems puts on his clothes, or refreshes himself with food and wine, or he jokes his steeds, or takes a journey and in the evening preparation is made for his repose.

To give brief to subjects prosaic as these without seeming unseasonably tumid is extremely difficult.   Mr. Pope abridges some of them, and others he omits; but neither of these liberties was compatible with the nature of translation.   (William Cowper)

(3) Well I had rather follow his (Demosthenes) vein, than over-flourish with superfluous speech, although I might thereby be counted equal with the best that overwrote English.   (Wilson)

In the opinion of the above mentioned scholars, the translator ought to endeavor to copy the author in all the variations of his style and the different modulations of his numbers, and not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the world, nor to confound any rites and customs of antiquity.

In this situation, TF, though hiding itself in the original works, are placed in an unprecedented important position because, in stringent school"s viewpoints, translated text must strictly represent or copy all aspects of the original one in its times. In this sense, any one that translating without concerning about this TFT is a real "traitor".

Manoeuvrable approach

A manoeuvrable approach to translation finds its expression in the following citations :

(1) I have not pained myself to render word for word, nor proverb for proverb … which may be

thought by some cunning translators a deadly sin.   (Thomas Chaloner)

(2) But many, no doubt, will say Horace is by me forsaken, his lyric softness and emphatical

   muse maimed : that there is a general defection from his genuine harmony. I must tell, I have in this
   translation rather sought his spirit than numbers.   (Holiday)

(3)… seeking there in the true sense and meaning of the author, rather than precisely following the strict rules of a nice translator, in observing the very words of the author.   (Richard Roll)

Manoeuvrable translators emphasize on equivalent effect of the version to the original, They mean to represent the original positively and vividly, showing before the readers of the version the equivalent world to that in the original, mainly according to their own understanding and expressing in their own way instead of transmitting the original"word for word".

Some statements show a wise eclecticism. The principle, "word for word for possible; if not, sense for sense", is common in connection with medieval translations, but is susceptible of different interpretations. Richard Rolle, in *Psalter,* says:"I follow the letter as much as I may. And where find no proper English I follow the wit of the words. "which herein consists the kernel of eclecticism. Summarily, there should be adopted a critical and discriminative attitude toward the abovecited quotations from the champions both for stringent approach and for manoeuvrable approach. Moderation is the golden mean. In rendering technical data, stringency is more operative than manoeuvrability; in rending amorous madrigals, the former is less appealing than the latter. Their contradiction may be unfied in giving free

rein to their respective superiority in translation.

In this circumstance, however the variant of the stringent and manoeuvrable approaches is developing. One thing is unchangeable, i.e., it is not only TFT itself, but also a proper way to represent TFT both in the original and the one transmitted to the translation. In a word, eclecticism is a developing type of TFT

V. Conclusions

Conclusions

Based on the TC, and above findings and discussions, times features of translation can be concluded as follow:

1) With the further development of he times, translations are much closer to the original text both in the language level and though height.

2) With such a rapid development of times context, translation readers' feelings towards the translated text will certainly be much closer to those of the original readers.

3) The more lingual synchroneity of times is concerned, the more it facilitates dealing with bilingual forms and senses l in translating.

4) Times of translation witnesses not only the varieties of newly incredible errors but also more and more newer and better solutions.

5) The developing eclecticism between stringent and manoeuvrable in translating is a TFT of both the original and the translation.

Expectations

No works and thoughts can live, neither without nor beyond, its times features. In future studies on this topic, three aspects are expected to pay attention: Initially, to lead the nose of times features of the bilingual carrier is very important and necessary in transmitting the thoughts from source text to the target one. Furthermore, grasping the times features of thoughts conveyed by the original will, covertly, make the contradictions or difficulties less complex. Finally, times features can serve as sub-criteria in translation, which can not only be used to help remove obstacles in translation but also be employed to self-examine and estimate the discrepancy between the target text and the original one.