

Analysis of Style Reproduction in Translation from the Perspective of Stylistic

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Abstract: Style translation is of vital importance in striving to express the thematic meaning and heightening aesthetic effect. The central core of style reproduction in translation is to accurately adopt the most natural and equivalent language to reproduce the source information in the target language. In this paper, first of all, it reviews the style study at home and abroad. It takes the view that style means the characteristics of wording, sentences as well as the whole discourse of the source text. Then it analyzes the style translation from perspective of stylistics. The author considers that style can be perceived and has its own distinguished feature. By analyzing the different aspects, that is, wording, syntax, rhetoric and discourse, the present paper states clearly the translatability of style.

Keywords: stylistics, style, style reproduction, translation

1. INTRODUCTION

The task of stylistics emphasizes the language features of principal styles, to be specific, its phonology, lexis, syntax and whole discourse of source text. As one of the vital elements, style of source text should be considered in translation practice. Style is not invisible, since stylistic features are revealed by linguistic factors of language. It manifests itself through words and sentence structure, phrases and text organization. Obviously, style is not intangible; instead, it can be genuinely felt. The application of stylistics to style translation not only can help the translator enhance their stylistic awareness and become more sensitive to stylistic significance but better convey the information of source text to target reader.

2. STYLISITCS

Stylistics was, originally, a branch of rhetoric. With the development of the times, Stylistics is concerned with modern linguistics, literature and art. About one century developmental course, western stylistics has created various schools of stylistics. In china, the study of stylistics has been greatly promoted by western modern stylistics.

In general, the study of western stylistics takes major position in the world. In western, in ancient Rome and Greek the study of stylistics had a closely relationship with the rhetorical studies. Demetrius created the great work *On Style* in A.D 100.

The publication of *Traite De Stylistique Francaise* by Bally is the sign of beginning of modern stylistics. By adopting Saussure's structural linguistics, he considers to establish the stylistics as a branch of linguistics.

The study of modern stylistics extensively adopted the modern linguistic theories, and therefore the classification of stylistics became a hot discussion. In foreign academia, the most formal classification of stylistics was given by Simpson and Carter and stylistics was divided into six models: functional stylistics, formal stylistics, conversational stylistics, the literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics, socio-historical and socio-cultural stylistics.

On the whole there were four development stages western stylistics: formal stylistics, functional stylistics, discourse stylistics and socio-historical stylistics and socio-cultural stylistics. Functionalist stylistics entered the flourishing stage of development in the 1970s. Halliday is famous for the systematic functional linguistic theory. He believed that the style is semantic potential, and in the composition of the discourse is the systematic choice of the talker. In 1980s, discourse stylistics widely developed, which analyzes style with the modes of discourse analysis, text linguistics and pragmatics.

Since the 1990s the social-historical and social-cultural stylistics have been experiencing the most flourishing development because of the impact by Frankfurt school and the Marxism. In the west, lots of stylisticians began to emphasize ideology and authority relationship.

In china the study of stylistics is consisted of two parts: one is the study of ancient Chinese stylistics; the other is the introduction of the Western ideas of stylistics to China. The word "style" first appeared in the book *XinShu·Daoshu* of Ja Yi. Here "style" means "courtesy" rather than "stylistics". In *Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, a set of mature researching methods for Chinese ancient stylistics can be found, which provides more than one hundred and twenty styles. The study of Chinese ancient style is based on researching ancient Chinese literary works, which stresses mainly on two perspectives: first is the study of language and rhetoric, and the second is the stylistic criticism.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Chinese stylistics entered a new development time. In China, Chen Wangdao published his *An Introduction to Rhetoric* which symbolizes the beginning of modern stylistics. Wang Zuoliang who is the first person pays close attention to the study of western modern stylistics is. Afterwards, a large number of works on stylistics were published, which showed greatly interests in the study of stylistics among Chinese scholars. For instance, *Stylistics and Fiction Translation, Outlines of Western Stylistics, Introduction to English Stylistics, Theoretical Stylistics, Style Translation* and so on.

As far as Liu Shisheng concerned, stylistic is classified into two categories: literary stylistics, which includes all kinds of stylistic devices for literary analysis, and general stylistics, which refers to all studies of the varieties of language.

In his influential work *introduction of English stylistics* (1987), Wang Zuoliang believes that stylistics is the study of style. The task of stylistics does not lie in listing items of various styles; it emphasizes the language features of principal styles, to be specific, its phonology, lexis, syntax and whole discourse of source text. This thesis will explore stylistics from Wang Zuoliang.

3. STYLE

With the gradual maturity of stylistics, the definition of “style” becomes an important aspect of the study of stylistics. As the kernel of stylistics, the significance of style can never be overstated. The reproduction of style of the original to the greatest extent has been paid more attention. For example, Nida claims that translation from semantic meaning to style requires translators to accurately adopt the most natural and equivalent language to reproduce the source information in the target language. Greatly influenced by modern linguistics, lots of stylisticians consider that the analysis of style should be the comprehensive exploration of linguistic expressions and linguistic structure. The rendering and the conveyance of style is closely linked to the study of style.

Many eminent scholars and writers have also emphasized the importance of the style.

Swift believed that proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style;

Lord Chesterfield stated that style is the dress of thoughts;

Tyler expressed his three enlighten principles on the laws of translation in his *Essay on the Principle of Translation*, that is, the manner and style of an article should be of the same feature with that of the original; the translation should be conveyed the complete ideas of the original text; and the translation should have all the ease of original work.

Wang Zuoliang holds that style is the personal manner of the author to express specific content;

The word style has several senses: it may refer to a writer’s habitual or peculiar way of using language, or the prevalent features of the language of a certain period, or the prevalent features of the language of a certain period, or the characteristic aspects of the language of a certain type of writing. (Ding Wangdao, 2010:207)

In this thesis, the last meaning is involved. Style means the characteristics of wording, sentences as well as the whole discourse of the source text. The analysis and assessment of style relate to study of the work’s choice of words, figures of speech, the devices, for example, rhetorical, the shape of sentences, the shape of paragraphs; indeed, of every conceivable aspect of the writer’s language and the way in which he put it.

Liu Zhongde believes that in order to meet the demand of reproducing the thought, feeling and style of the original, all the words, sentences, and paragraphs, should be studied attentively and chosen the proper expression in the process of translation. Style is formed by the happy coordination of words, sentences, and paragraphs from the linguistic perspective.

Two aspects should be bear in mind when translating. On one hand, during translation process, the translator should conduct a study of all the essential elements, such as wording, sentence-making, and paragraphing, as well as rhetorical devices. On the other, translated text is conforming to the feeling, mood, thought and meaning of the original. To be more specific, every figure of speech must be deal with properly, every word must be weighed carefully, and the sentences should be organized scientifically and flexibly. As long as these essential parts are tackled properly, the reproduction of style will be no longer an ideal that is unattainable. Actually, on the premise of attending to the reading habits and aesthetic expectation of the target readers, if translators could make the linguistic forms of translation to full extent and keep the syntactic structures of the original greatly approximate to that of the original, it may better convey the original style. (Xu Jun & Mu Lei, 2009:270)

4. STYLE TRANSALTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STYLISITCS

In general, the study of style translation is conducted by selecting certain language uses and seeks for meaning correspondence in translation. The process of style rendering is to maintain the stylistic value and real the original beauty. Stylistics plays significant role in style translation. For the inadequacy of general approach to style translation, stylistics analysis can not only serve as a remedy by offering a more precise insight into the reproduction of style, but also help to adapt the translated version to that of the original style in an appropriate way.

As Wang Zuoliang stated that the main issue of stylistics discussion is the appropriateness of language to its context. As to style translation, Liu Miqing hold that the focus of style translation is the style of the original text. As to the adaptability of style of translated text, the foundation of which is stylistic analysis of the original text to the original text. That is to say, translation of style explores not only the style-expressing means but also how to make the translation correspond to the original and obtain the appropriateness to the original language in respect of style. Stylistics bears intimate relationships with style translation. As mentioned above, the core of stylistics is not lie in listing various styles, it emphasis the language character s of principal, to be more specific, the features of words, sentence and paraphrase of each style. In the process of transferring style, the key point is to convey the above-mentioned linguistic features faithfully.

5. TRANSLATABILITY OF STYLE

After having a clear picture of the style and significance of stylistics, as to the translatability of style, it is a hot discussion among the scholars and linguists and has arose greatly attracting and attention. Many people acclaim style as mysterious and elusive. The issue of whether style can be reproduced is a long-lasting discussion among stylistician. There are two different viewpoints toward this question; one is affirmative while the other opposes it. Despite its difficulty, numerous scholars have been constantly dedicated to this field.

The essence of the style is difficult to grasp. The fact is that it is neither elusive nor mysterious from stylistic perspective. Style is just as a shadow reflecting the way people behave, the way people speak, the way they cope with their daily affairs and the way they express themselves. Whether or not he or she is conscious of it, every writer is invariably connected with style. Let's take some of well-known ones for instance. Bacon is famous for his stylistic directness, forcefulness and terseness. When we refer to Hemingway, we think his works as natural, succinct, straightforward and factual; Bernard Shaw is well at satirical humor and honest criticism. It is evident that style is embodied in the style of language, not mysterious at all. It manifests itself through words and sentence structure, phrases and text organization. Obviously, style is not intangible; instead, it can be genuinely felt.

According to Nida, when judging the style of the original, the translator needs to maintain unbiased and objective, otherwise a partial discernment is very likely to cause a fail in the translation of style. As to the translatability of style, this thesis holds that it is possible to translate style. Nida once said regardless enormous differences in linguistics structure and cultural features; a person who is involved in translation practice is impressed that effective interlingual communication is always possible. These impressions as to the relative adequacy of interlingual communication are based on two fundamental factors: (1) semantic similarities between language; and (2) fundamental similarities in the syntactic structure of language at the so-called kernel, core, and level. He believes that it is possible to find the equivalence in the process of style reproduction because of the existence of the common core in every language, in spite of the difficulty in reproducing the original style.

5.1 Stylistic reproduction at Lexical Level

Generally speaking, the effective way to achieve appropriateness is to choose the right words for the right subject, the right style, the right target reader and the right purpose.

Vocabulary can be discussed from many aspects since its component-word has many classifications. Whether it is expressed in spoken or written form, word is a unit of expression that has universal intuitive reorganization by native speakers. The analysis of words is helpful in understanding the style of a piece work because words can be classified into lexical words, such as, verbs, adjectives, nouns, and adverbs; and grammatical words, such as prepositions, pronouns, articles, and conjunctions.

The above two kinds are also known as content words and function words. What' more, words also include colloquial and literary words, standard and non-standard words, formal and informal words, slang, and archaic words. Therefore, the choice of words plays a significant role in the content of a work, and also defines what kind of style it belongs to. In order to choose the most suitable words for the purpose of reproducing the closest equivalence of the original style, the following elements should be taken into consideration: the denotation and the connotation of words.

(1) Denotation

The denotation of a word is the most direct and specific meaning of a word or an expression. It is because that denotation generally refers to the literal meaning of a word, that is, the “dictionary definition.” The actual object or idea the word refers to. Denotation of a word does not stay unchanging. Instead, it varies with the development of society, the passage of time as well as the change of language itself. Words can change from many directions. They could be extended, be narrowed, be transformed, and be omitted.

(2) Connotation

Words do not only have denotation but also have connotation. Connotation refers to the associations that are connected to a certain word or the emotional suggestion related to that word. The meaning of a word should be analyzed from basic meaning to extending meaning. Therefore, the connotative meanings of a word exist together with the denotative meanings. The two are closely related to each other, the former is more explicit while the latter is more implicit. Connotations are more complex, compared with denotations of words. Connotations of some words share the same meaning in different languages, while some vary entirely.

5.2 Stylistic Reproduction at Rhetoric

“At the lexical level of the source language, the basic means may be contained in the big subject of ‘diction’, which involves the choice of word, register and collocation. On the other hand, the conveyance of aesthetic information lies in the application of various rhetorical devices in lexical level, which is the active means for bearing the aesthetic information.”(Liu Miqing, 2005:12)

(1) Simile

As one of the rhetorical methods, simile serves to express a resemblance between two things and its features by the words “as” or “like”. Simile not only carries the aesthetic constituents from the original but creates the aesthetic effect of works. As a result, a translator is essentially required to pay attention to the translation of simile, so as to deliver the aesthetic value to the target readers. A simile can explicitly provide the basis of a comparison or leave this basis implicit. In the implicit case the simile leaves the audience to determine for themselves which features of the target are being predicated. Similes also protect the author against outrageous, incomplete, or unfair comparison.

(2) Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech containing an implied comparison, in which a word or phrase is used to describe an object or action by comparing it to something or somebody else, for the purpose of showing the resemblance or the same qualities between two things having some similar characteristics and making the description more powerful. Unlike simile, there is no use of words “like” or “as” in a metaphor. As an effectively rhetorical device, a metaphor plays an important role in making language beautiful and vivid. Besides, a metaphor not only

creates the beauty of language but also presents the unique aesthetic temperament of a nation. Generally, metaphor is the stronger and more encompassing.

In order to represent the aesthetic effect of works, a translator should hold the aesthetic constituents carried by metaphor and reproduce the aesthetic value created by metaphor, which may help to meet the aesthetic taste of the target readers.

(3) Personification

Personification is a figure of speech in which human characteristics are attributed to an abstract quality, animal, or inanimate object, or with the life of human beings. Personification is usually employed to add vividness to expression. The device of personification enables articles to be more infectious and aesthetically appealing to the readers.

5.3 Stylistic Reproduction at Syntactic Level

It is necessary to consider about syntax before the discussion on syntactic features. In terms of syntax, it refers to the rules for ordering and connecting words into sentences. A certain rules of ordering should be followed to form a meaningful sentence.

(1) Lexicon-grammatical Form

Leech and Short consider that Syntax, in a broad sense in which it is commonly used today, is the level of lexicon-grammatical form which mediates between the levels of sound and meaning. Therefore, it includes both lexical choice, that is choice of words from the vocabulary of language, and the grammatical choice involved in combing these words into sentence. Thus, when considering the syntactic effect the lexical choice of sentence not only will be analyzed, but also the relation of one sentence with its neighboring sentences will be examined.

(2) Parallelism

Parallelism means the repetition of phrases or clauses of similar structure makes a sentence more balanced, more emphatic and more elegant. The application of parallelism in sentence construction can sometimes improve writing style clearness and readability. Parallelism always with the syntactical structure has the orderly arrangement and contributes to the beautiful and smooth language and brings about the strong semantic effect.

5.4 Stylistic Reproduction at Discourse Level

Discourse is a very remarkable feature in translation in that it provides useful guidelines for the comprehension and analysis of the source text and helps translators reproduce a coherent and cohesive text for receptors of the target language. The final purpose of a translator is to achieve equivalence at the textual level, rather than merely at word or phrase level. The expressive potential of grammatical structure and lexical items is only realized in communicative events, that is, in text.

5.5 Translating by Deep Structure rather than Surface Structure

According to generative grammar, every sentence exists on two levels: the surface structure which corresponds to the actual spoken sentence and the deep structure which underlines meaning of the sentence. Thus, the actual meaning lies in the deep structure. The same meaning can be conveyed by many different surface structures.

6. CONCLUSION

Style is conveyed by means of wording and sentence-making, therefore, word unit and sentence unit are significant factors in deciding the stylistic features of a piece of article. They are the basis and help to decide the tone and spirit of piece of writing. Wang Zuoliang and Ding Wangdao proposed a precise definition of stylistics for the readers. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which applies the theory and methodology of modern linguistics to the study of style.

Therefore, as mentioned above, some language elements such as the vocabulary, sentence patterns, and rhetorical devices are considered in this thesis. Generally speaking, studies of style translation are operated by picking up several language uses and seek for meaning correspondence in translation. Stylistic analysis can serve as a remedy for the inadequacy of general approach to style translation by offering a more precise insight into reproduction of style and help to adapt the translated version to that of the original style in an appropriate way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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