

A Study on Metaphor Japanese Translation Strategies in Political Literature from the Perspective of Cognitive Linguistics

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Abstract: From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, translation is a practical activity with cognitive attributes. Relevance theory interprets the deep structure and meaning of metaphors from the perspective of optimal relevance, providing an evaluation mechanism for metaphor research within the framework of cognitive linguistics theory. Metaphor translation is the conversion between two languages, and the cultural differences between languages inevitably hinder this conversion process, making metaphor translation a difficult task. As an indispensable expression in political literature, metaphor permeates the cultural connotations of discourse, reflects the ideology of discourse, and provides a basis for interpreting the deep structure of discourse. This article takes the metaphor and translation of discourse in political literature as the research object, and explores the Japanese translation strategies of metaphors from the perspective of cognitive linguistics.

Keywords: Metaphor; Cognitive Strategies; Translation Teaching

1. Introduction

Discourse is an important carrier of politics. Political discourse is located at the core of a country's discourse system, involving historical conditions, culture and values, full of value orientation, constrained by history and culture, and its translation and dissemination has been a long-term concern of academic circles at home and abroad. In 1990s, with the turn of political discourse, linguists began to study political discourse as a special genre. At the same time, political discourse translation studies based on western translation theories (such as Skopos Theory, Functional Equivalence Theory, Semiotics Theory, Defamiliarization Theory, etc.) have emerged.

Schäffner [1] examines the translation strategies of diplomatic discourse from a functional perspective, and holds that translation is the communication between two languages, two cultures or cross-cultures, and translation can realize the discourse strategy functions of political languages such as "coercion, resistance, cover-up, legalization (or illegality)".

In the process of strengthening the capacity building of international communication, discourse translation in political documents, as a national discourse capacity, has become an important part of international communication. Based on the practical need to build the right to speak that matches China's comprehensive national strength and international status, improving national translation ability has become a major issue in national capacity building. Sun [2] holds that metaphor is the most important and difficult point in the translation of political discourse, which has a powerful cognitive function. Political discourse needs to resort to a perfect metaphor framework, and metaphor becomes the backbone to support national discourse and its translation. It can be seen that metaphor is a hurdle that must be overcome on the road to improving national translation ability.

Nowadays, metaphor has become a hot issue in academic research at home and abroad. However, translation is the transformation from one language to another, which has much in common with metaphor, so there are more and more studies focusing on metaphor translation. In particular, there are a large number of metaphorical expressions in political documents, and the study of metaphor translation based on political documents has attracted much attention. However, because many metaphorical expressions in political documents have specific cultural connotations in the source domain, it is sometimes difficult to find corresponding expressions in the target

domain, which sets obstacles for the translation of metaphors in documents and increases the difficulty of translation. However, as a carrier of political discourse, metaphor is embedded with China's traditional culture and values, which can not only stimulate people's emotions and guide mainstream ideology, but also be an indispensable field in the construction of China's foreign discourse system. It is very important to tell the story of China and spread the voice of China. In view of this, this paper takes metaphors in political literature and their translation as the research object, and discusses the Japanese translation strategies of metaphors from the perspective of cognitive linguistics.

2. The Concept of Metaphor and Metaphor Translation from the Perspective of Cognitive Linguistics

Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, once defined metaphor as "giving things a name that belongs to other things" [3]. This definition involves meaning transfer and "cross-domain mapping" in metaphor. Later, Lakoff and Johnson set off a metaphor revolution, proposing that metaphor is the basic way for human beings to know the world, and finally it will be promoted to a cognitive level. As a cognitive means, metaphor permeates political language and affects people's way of thinking. Metaphor is a creative use of discourse. Metaphor is regarded as a kind of "mapping across conceptual domains", that is, the mapping from source domain to target domain [4]. Metaphor classification has always been the core issue of metaphor research. Lakoff & Johnson divides metaphor into three categories: structural metaphor, positional metaphor and ontological metaphor. Based on prototype theory, Zhang [5] puts forward that structural metaphor, orientation metaphor and entity metaphor are not in the same cognitive plane. Metaphor is an upper category, the basic category is structural metaphor, and the lower category is orientation metaphor and entity metaphor. Zhang [6] put forward four metaphor classification standards from four angles: metaphor ontology, metaphor hierarchy, metaphor operation and literary metaphor. The metaphor classification of conceptual metaphor theory is relative, not parallel, and has certain systematicness and

overlapping. With the deepening of research, the classification of metaphor has been constantly improved and updated.

On the other hand, in the foreign translation and dissemination of political discourse, the words, expressions, tone and discourse patterns of translation are not only related to language and cultural factors, but also depend on social, political, ideological and other factors, especially the power relations included in them.

Political discourse translation needs to have interdisciplinary consciousness and analyze China's external image through theoretical support. Hu & Tian [7] started from the critical discourse analysis theory and built a corpus to analyze the image of China created by the English translation of foreign teachers' discourses. Zhao [8] introduced the normative concept of Toury's descriptive translology and commented on the English versions of leaders' works. Yang & Qi [9] took literary translation as a mirror and non-literary as the foundation, and summarized the PEAR principle of diplomatic rhetoric translation. Zhou [10] explored the concealment of political discourse. Metaphorical features, cognitive model of discourse structure and the ideas of national governance and global governance, and think that the interpretation of political discourse needs to realize three turns. At present, discourse translation in political literature is still a "weak" topic in the field of translation research. Compared with literary translation, the research results are obviously less. In recent years, the study of discourse translation in domestic political literature mainly involves translation theory and translation practice. Theoretical research focuses on the characteristics, translation principles and translation strategies of discourse translation, and advocates following the traditional literary translation methods and building a translation theory that conforms to China's discourse habits on the basis of drawing lessons from western translation theories. In contrast, the localization of discourse translation theory is relatively weak. The practical study of discourse translation in political literature shows the coexistence of linguistic level and super-linguistic level. On the linguistic level, scholars describe the linguistic features and translation rules of discourse translation from the perspectives of

vocabulary, discourse, symbols, pragmatics, rhetoric and communication. The research on the supralinguistic level focuses on the linkage between discourse translation and communication and discourse construction, focusing on discourse translation and the construction of national image, discourse translation and the construction of foreign discourse system [11], and the social and cultural context behind discourse translation [12]. Generally speaking, the topics of translation studies in this field are diverse and the number is on the rise.

However, the study of metaphor in political literature has not been systematically described and analyzed. Metaphor is to map the meaning of the source domain to the target domain. In the abstract and complex political field, metaphor can interfere with the audience's thinking and cognition and attract the audience's attention. Metaphor has four political functions, namely, simplifying cognitive style, filling meaning, selectively framing and promoting the process of security. When facing the complex world, metaphor can be used as a cognitive filter, resulting in information simplification. In the competitive discourse environment, abstract terms and logic of international politics are often expressed through metaphors. In diplomatic practice, metaphor is not only an important way to show intentions and shape beliefs, but also a key means to promote or limit political legitimacy. It can change the audience's subjective beliefs by influencing cognition and emotion. It is more valuable for political audiences to explain abstract problems through visual metaphors. Wen [13] pointed out that metaphors in political literature contain rich ideology. The associative meaning of metaphor in discourse is no longer confined to the cultural level, but rooted in the realistic soil of the country, reflecting the country's ideology and world outlook. Metaphor translation, as an important means of national discourse communication, is ostensibly an interlingual transformation of metaphor, but actually conveys the historical and cultural connotation of metaphor, the root of which is to spread the national ideology and tell the story of China Road, China Idea and China Plan, so as to seize the opportunity of discourse, shape the national image and safeguard the national interests.

Therefore, from the theoretical point of view, the study of metaphor translation strategies in political documents can promote the study of the influence of translation on the international discourse system. From the perspective of application value, using discourse research methods and achievements to guide translation practice may open up an effective path for translation research and practice to go hand in hand and enhance the spread of translated discourse.

3. The Japanese Translation Strategies of Metaphor from the Perspective of Cognitive Linguistics

3.1 The Cognitive Perspective of Metaphor Translation

Metaphor translation is to select the cognitive equivalent of the source metaphor in the target language and form an appropriate conceptual mapping. Therefore, when there is a similar mapping relationship between the conceptual domain of metaphor in the source language and the target language, translation should keep the image of metaphor in the source language and carry out literal translation. When the conceptual domain of metaphor in the source language is quite different from that in the target language, we can change the metaphorical image in the source language and adopt the methods of free translation and augmented translation. Specifically, in the process of translating metaphors in political documents, direct translation can be used to express the common psychological experience and language habits of many nationalities. However, based on the unique expression habits of Chinese, metaphor also has strong China culture, which is closely related to China's politics, economy and society. Therefore, in the process of metaphor translation, it is sometimes necessary to add appropriate meanings on the basis of literal translation for special metaphorical words with strong cultural characteristics in China.

3.1.1 Journey metaphor

In political literature, the frequency of journey metaphor is very high. It is a structural metaphor in conceptual metaphor, which highlights the abstract concept of the target domain with journey. That is to say, journey metaphor is to map the constituent elements in the source domain "journey" to the target

domain.

Example (1): Facing the international and domestic political turmoil, he calmly observed and responded, persisted in promoting China's modernization.

In example (1), the source domain of the original text is "journey" and the destination domain is "China's modernization cause", which forms the journey metaphor of "promoting modernization cause". Although there are great differences in political system and social ideology between China and Japan, there are similarities in cognition due to cultural similarity, and the development process of things is generally grasped from a dynamic perspective. Therefore, literal translation is adopted here to retain the original metaphor, which is in line with readers' cognition.

3.1.2. Animal metaphor

Many human behaviors can be understood by animal behavior metaphors, which are common in political literature and political discourse. Metaphor can be used to construct human thoughts, shape political personality and show political stance. That is, animal metaphor is based on consensus and similarity, and is used to express people's internal and external characteristics.

Example (2): Our government is a government that serves the people wholeheartedly, and it must always maintain flesh-and-blood ties with the people. Therefore, it is necessary to govern the country first and strictly. We must resolutely deal with unhealthy tendencies and corruption within the government, and insist on fighting "tigers" and "flies" together, which is welcomed by the people.

Example (2) compares "big and small corrupt officials" with "tiger" and "fly" respectively, which is a distinctive expression. Chinese political discourse is deeply influenced by China culture, and some of its metaphors may be obscure to western readers. Based on the cultural differences between China and Japan, it is difficult for Japanese readers to understand the meaning of the original text without further explanation in the translation. Therefore, in this case, it is necessary to add appropriate meanings or literal translation+annotation to preserve the cultural characteristics of the original metaphor and help Japanese readers understand its deep meaning.

3.2 Context Interpretation Based on Political Equivalence

At present, the focus of domestic translation has changed from "input" to "output", and the foreign translation of political literature discourse is of great significance to the construction of diplomatic discourse system of a big country. However, due to the differences in ideology, social culture, political ecology and other aspects, China's internal government affairs and diplomatic thoughts are misunderstood abroad. Therefore, discourse translation needs interdisciplinary awareness and theoretical support to analyze China's external image. Yang & Zhao [14] put forward the principle of political equivalence based on equivalence theory and combined with practice, arguing that the translator of translated discourse must accurately and faithfully reflect the political thoughts and political context of the original text and the original author, and at the same time express it in a way that the target readers can understand, so as to convey the political connotation of the original text and realize the same or similar communicative function.

On the other hand, meaning and context are related to each other. Language communication is inseparable from the specific language environment, and the meaning of words has different contextual meanings in different contexts. To understand the discourse in a country's political literature, we need to relate it to the context. Only in this way can we correctly express the accurate connotation of the word. Therefore, contextual interpretation is an effective metaphor translation method. The traditional view of context holds that context includes linguistic environment and non-linguistic environment (social and cultural background knowledge, time and place of communication, etc.). Relevance theory holds that context is a psychological structure, which is also called cognitive context. Therefore, context includes cognitive context besides linguistic environment and non-linguistic environment. Cognitive context is dynamic, which is the result of the speaker's constant choice in the process of understanding. Interpretation is to change the wording from one language plane to another without changing the original meaning. Therefore, on the basis of political

equivalence, metaphor translation should combine context, especially cognitive context, to complete anaphora interpretation. As Newmark said, political discourses and documents are “expressive texts”, and semantic translation is the main line. Translation should follow translation faithfulness and make some “small concessions” according to the cognition of the target readers.

War has always been accompanied by the historical development of human society, which has a far-reaching impact on human language, culture and thinking. The concept of “war” has become an effective narrative tool in people’s daily discourse behavior. War metaphor compares non-war behaviors or events to wars in the real world, and constructs the cross-domain mapping between other different conceptual domains in the “war domain”. The conceptual structure of war consists of participants, strategies and tactics, flags and attacks.

Example (3): We will comprehensively promote the government’s self-construction, improve the government’s ability of self-improvement, self-innovation and self-improvement, maintain a high-pressure situation of zero tolerance for corruption, improve the construction of institutional mechanisms, and constantly enhance its ruling ability.

Example (3) Through the metaphor of war, readers can have a more accurate understanding of “anti-corruption”. “The high-pressure situation of zero tolerance” embodies the integrity, determination and confidence in fighting corruption. Based on the principle of political equivalence, as the expression of “high pressure” is rarely used in Japanese, in a specific cognitive context, the interpretation and translation of “high pressure situation” here is more in line with Japanese habits. War metaphors are often used in political documents and important speeches, especially in anti-corruption speeches. Anti-corruption is a war without smoke. Ordinary people regard corruption as a common enemy, so they can better understand the importance and seriousness of this war. At the same time, the metaphor of war also implies the difficulty coefficient of anti-corruption.

4. Conclusion

Political discourse is the core of the foreign discourse system, which embodies the ruling idea and experience of the government. However, metaphorical discourse in political practice shows subjective cognition and emotional bearing. In order to make the best use of metaphor, politicians often compare historical myths, allusions or historical events embedded in the cultural value system with the current political reality. Effective metaphor translation can better realize the transformation of discourse value and play an important role in the process of spreading China’s ideas of internal and external affairs, so metaphor translation is particularly important. Political discourse translation has its particularity. Only by grasping readers’ cognitive ability can we have a clear aim and realize the functions of text communication and political and cultural communication. From the perspective of conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, this paper discusses the metaphor translation strategies of contemporary political discourse. Through the research, it is concluded that in metaphor, appropriate translation methods should be chosen based on the common psychological experience and language environment of the nation, or literal translation or meaning addition; On the basis of following the principle of political equivalence, the anaphora interpretation is carried out in combination with the changes of dynamic context.

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