

A Study of Language and Cultural Differences in Japanese Translation

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Abstract: With the development of social economy and the deepening of exchanges between countries, Japan and China are geographically close with a long-standing cultural connection. Therefore, Japanese translation has a high demand in the market. However, in the process of translation, cultural differences should also be paid attention to achieving the accuracy of meaning expression.

1. Introduction

Every language has its own national culture. In the process of learning and using culture, only learning language and vocabulary can not meet the needs of language. It also needs to be relayed from the cultural background to achieve the successful transfer of cultural characteristics. This paper will take Japanese translation as an example, focusing on cultural differences, hoping to help the translation process more smoothly and naturally.

2. Grammar structure

2.1 Sentence structure

In Japanese, there are many styles. Different styles have their own existential meanings. In the process of translation, sentences cannot be translated simply. Instead, it should start with the content of the style, excavate potential meanings, realize the transmission of information in the aspects of relationship between people and emergencies, so that readers can better accept and understand the expression of Japanese.

The most typical is the relationship between written style and spoken style. Spoken language usually exists in dialogues, interviews, speeches and so on. The translation process of this style requires abbreviations in sentences. Usually, the Japanese expression is to simplify the abbreviation of subject and shared information, and often cooperate with each other to speak a sentence, so it is incomplete. Sentences are the norm in translation. For example, there are such examples in the Japanese Education PowerPoint of Baidu Library. A: 言った言わないなんてことよりも、自分の佐藤さん見ていた目が。B: 変わってしまう? A: 何をみていたんだらうって。From sentence B, characters' names are omitted. It can be seen that although it does not appear in the dialogue, because it is content that both people know, it can be inferred that this is a rumor between familiar friends. Similarly, in non-speaking expressions, such as poetry, newspapers, teaching, and speech, most of the more formal words are used. The language is more formal, and the style is more obvious and regular. The formatting is obvious and the easiest, and also the most easily studied style of sentence structure by academic Japanese learners. For example, 今日のニュースの主な内容は国民経済の発展状況です(The main content of today's news is the development of the national economy.) This normative style of written language is precise and well organized. Therefore, it is also a sentence with low difficulty coefficient in Japanese translation. In the process of such translation, only professional vocabulary can be grasped on the basis of structure.

2.2 Thinking Differences

Thinking structure directly determines the way of language construction. In order to achieve semantic perfection in Japanese translation, it is necessary to grasp thinking, analyze Japanese thinking in cultural differences, and excavate the surface meaning and deep meaning of language structure ^[1].

At the level of translation, it is divided into three aspects: transliteration, literal and free

translation. In the process of translation, it is necessary to stand on the Japanese mind for semantic exchange. First of all, in the national thinking of the Japanese, more attention is paid to detail and figurative thinking. Therefore, in the translation of folklore speech, it is necessary to analyze the actual case. For example, the transliteration of “雨降って地固まる” means “It’s sunny after rain.” However, in the process of Chinese translation, it can be translated into “no strikes, no strangers”. Free translation refers to the semantic substitution on the premise of preserving life experience and cultural atmosphere. This mode of translation belongs to the highest level of translation. It maintains the basic cultural color on the grammatical structure and carries out the concept substitution of “only meaning can not be expressed”. In addition, there are still great differences in values between China and Japan. In Chinese kinship relations, the distinction between kinship within the family is very obvious, but in Japanese, “older and younger brother” are both called “brothers”, which can give an overview of relatives, so in Japanese translation. There are great differences between signans and designatums. In the translation of literary works, it is necessary to clear up the relationship between characters and comb the relationship between close relatives so as to compensate readers culturally.

3. Semantic covers

3.1 Express implicature

In Japanese, the Japanese usually do not make clear command requirements in communication, especially when they ask for goods or help from others, they tend to emphasize euphemistic expression. Therefore, in many sentences, there are a variety of potential meanings. Therefore, in the process of translation, it is particularly necessary to analyze the expression of Japanese in the light of context and semantics, so as to avoid the inconsistency of context and ambiguity of semantics brought about by literal translation.

First of all, Japanese expression will circle around the situation, that is, to avoid the psychological discomfort that bluntness brings to the listener, for example, when asking “whether there is an agreement today”, the Chinese expression is to ask directly “Are you free today?” If you are not free, you will answer “I’m sorry, there are plans for today” or something like that, in Japanese. “今日はお酒を飲みにいきますか。” The answer is “今日はちょっとね。” This expression does not directly use the explicit negative words, but carries out the implied meaning. In this case, it needs to be considered in accordance with the actual situation. On the other hand, the expression of implicature in Japanese also carries out some expressions of ellipsis meaning, which may cause some doubts for those who are new to Japanese, because there are too many elements omitted in sentences, but through the continuous learning and accumulation of Japanese, some sentences can have a sense of language. どうも means thank you(ありがとうございます); sorry(すみません); hello(や、どうも). Therefore, in the process of translation, the corresponding omission will be supplemented ^[2].

3.2 Sound training pronunciation

In Japanese, sound reading and training are two major classification methods. Among them, there are a large number of Chinese characters developed from ancient Chinese characters in Chinese. Therefore, in the process of translating Japanese and Chinese, it is necessary to especially grasp the situation, avoid the different words of the same word, or the form of different words of homonyms, try to ensure that the meaning of the translation process is accurate and not affected by Chinese thinking.

First of all, for certain Chinese characters, but the meanings of the different phrases need to be analyzed. For example, in Japanese, “mother” refers to “daughter” and “hand paper” refers to “letter”. These meanings are more popular, but in Japanese too. There are more similar vocabulary. If you translate in Chinese in the process of translation, it is easy to fall into misunderstanding. So before the Japanese translation begins, you need to prepare your work and summarize the words. It is also necessary to pay attention to the compound vocabulary, and to translate it in a language

environment such as human customs, geographical environment and industry development. On the other hand, in sound reading and training, there are often cases where the use of a class of words is quite different in spoken and written language. The order of these words will change with the environment in which they are used, and the corresponding change in order will also bring about changes in pronunciation. In Japanese oral translation, this situation needs special attention. Only by combining cultural differences and respecting linguistic knowledge can translators successfully complete their work. In addition, although some words are written in spoken and written languages, they differ greatly in pronunciation. In writing, “grassland” is written as “prairie”. But in spoken language, there is such pronunciation “prairie”. Through the combination of pronunciation and training, translators can learn to translate. The author should have a better understanding of language knowledge and build a harmonious bridge for communication between different countries.

4. Background differences

4.1 The humble differences

Japan’s hierarchical conception in life is very obvious. It is not only in the status of esteem, but also in the order of the young and the old, there are also very obvious differences in humility. Therefore, in the process of using Japanese for translation, it is especially necessary to choose the right expressions that match their status^[3].

In this respect, the most characteristic of the Japanese people’s speech is the use of honorific words. The honorific words will be used by the younger generation to the ancestors and the lower level to the superiors. Through the honorific words, the translator can carry out the relationship of the characters appearing in the text or in the context. Invisible mining, and then add emotional color in the process of translation to ensure that translation can achieve the migratory expression of relationship.

For example, “すみません (sorry/sorry/please ask···)” is a more classic expression of honor in Japanese. Through this respect for the target, it also expresses self-improvement in the dialogue. Dear emotions, this is one of the more special places in Japanese grammar. In terms of part of speech, in detail, respectful words are divided into self-criticism and respectfulness and politeness. Generally speaking, in the front of adjectives and adjective verbs, the addition of “お” and “ご”, such as “お忙しい”、“ご親切”. It will also add the words “お” and “ご” in front of the nouns, “ご家族、お手紙”, which can meet the needs to raise the identity of the other party; in the use of self-esteem words, Chinese and Japanese have the same effect. For example, the words “simple house, small house, crude tea” are used to express the status of the other party’s identity by demeaning one side. The humility of honorific language also exists in the tone and tone of the language. Therefore, the oral translation of Japanese needs to pay attention to the translation in the scene, and try to meet the cultural and emotional needs.

4.2 Gender differences

In terms of gender, Japanese is also very different from other countries. There are different ways of expression between men and women in Japanese. Generally speaking, in Japanese society, men have a higher social status and women have certain limitations in social status. Therefore, in terms of expression, men have a broader way of expression than women, and their words are more domineering.

First of all, men and women use the neutral term “私 (わたし)”. In the process of Japanese translation, the general characters often use the term when they narrate themselves. Women use the term “私 (わたし)”. Then men usually use the term “私 (わたし)” in their youth. However, in the lyrics of female singers, this kind of words will also appear as a symbol of the trend, there are also some adolescent girls using “ぼく”, so in the translation of Japanese variety, animation and other cultural derivatives, this point needs to be paid attention to.

In addition, in the deformations of Japanese verbs, there are differences between men and women in the imperative type. Generally, the use of imperative type exists in more urgent situations.

Under the special circumstances of emergency assembly and fire, the imperative mood and emotional meaning are more rigid, such as “集合しろ! (Collection!)” However, the Japanese usually do not carry out rigid commands in their language expression, so there will also be “遊んばかりいないでもっと勉強しろ.(Don't just play, study hard)”. Such sentences serve as mandatory suggestions. In addition, in the use of command, women's tone is more gentle, and their emotional compulsive command is lighter. Moreover, they will add the “よ” as a buffer of mood, such as “もう8時だよ? 早く起きろよ? (Get up early. It's 8 o'clock)”. Therefore, in terms of gender differences, translators must pay attention to interjections, beautifying words and other words with different degrees, and try to conform to the mood of the characters^[4].

5. Conclusion

Language is the carrier of culture. The development of language benefits from the transmission of culture. In Japanese translation, it is not simply the correspondence between words, but also the conflict of cultural barriers combined with humanistic factors. There is no distinction between high and low culture and language. The purpose of translation is to help countries with different cultural backgrounds communicate. Only by breaking through cultural barriers can we get the resonance of language and promote the progress of communication smoothly.

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