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识解理论视角下《了凡四训》的英译研究

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【摘要】本文尝试借用识解理论,以《了凡四训》为研究对象,考察其英译本背后的认知理据。全文通过四个角度阐述识解理论与翻译的关系,包括具体性、焦点化、突显和视角;研究发现,四种识解方式,作用于识解和构建原文和译文全过程;不同的文化背景,在识解方式上存在一定差异,译者可重构识解方式,符合目的语读者的认知模式。据此,用识解理论分析《了凡四训》英译本,为今后中国文化典籍英译提供可借鉴的思路。

【关键词】识解理论;《了凡四训》英译;识解与翻译;转换;重构

A Study on the English Translation of "The Four Teachings of Liao Fan" from the Perspective of Interpretation Theory

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[Abstract] This paper attempts to use the theory of understanding to investigate the cognitive rationale behind the English translation of the Four Disciplines of Liao Fan. This paper expounds the relationship between understanding theory and translation from four perspectives, including concreteness, focus, prominence, and perspective. The study found that four comprehension methods are used in the whole process of understanding and constructing the original text and the translated text. Different cultural backgrounds have certain differences in the way of understanding, and the translator can reconstruct the way of understanding to conform to the cognitive mode of the target language reader. Based on this, this paper analyzes the English translation of the Four Disciplines of Liao Fan with the theory of understanding, so as to provide reference ideas for the English translation of Chinese cultural classics in the future.

[Keywords] understanding theory; English translation of "The Four Disciplines of Liao Fan"; Recognition and Translation; Conversion; reconstitution

引言

中国家训典籍中,《了凡四训》篇幅短小,但内涵深刻,兼融儒、释、道三家思想,被誉为深刻影响中国人的“传家宝”。作为认知语言学重要的组成部分,识解理论针对译者对不同文本类型和语境进行识解认知。本文尝试从识解视角分析《了凡四训》英译者的认知模式,进而探索译者对中华文化典籍英译的理解和重构。

1 理论背景

认知语言学中,识解是人的一种认知能力,“识解”方

式不同,结果也不同。翻译实践中。译文与原文而言,若两者的识解方式对应,翻译只需袭用原文的识解方式;若两者的识解方式存在差异,翻译时则应以符合译文读者认知能力的识解方式来替换原文识解方式(肖坤学,2013)。再识解过程中,会在不同程度上涉及到识解具体性、焦点化、突显、视角四个维度的变化。由此,笔者尝试从识解理论视角对《了凡四训》的英译进行阐释。

2 识解理论视角下《了凡四训》英译分析

中西方文化在识解方式存在明显的差异,因而对产生的

表达形式也有所不同,译者需充分发挥主观能动性,针对不同内容,从不同的识解维度进行灵活处理。以下,笔者将分别从四个识解维度讨论识解理论与翻译的关系,包括具体性、焦点化、突显和视角。

2.1 具体性与翻译

具体性是指说话人用不同的精确度和细节对同一情景进行描写的属性(文旭、肖开容,2019)。王宏印在《文学翻译批评概论》中也提到:文学翻译批评的第一步就是要“研读原作”(2009)。在翻译实践中,要实现源语与目的语在具体性上完全对等是很难的,这时就需要详细度的互化,即详化略或略化详(文旭、肖开容,2019)。

例1春秋诸大夫,见人言动,亿而谈其祸福,靡不验者,《左》、《国》诸记可观也。

During the Spring and Autumn period, the high officials of every state in China were able to predict accurately whether a person was to experience good fortune or misfortune, based on their observations of that person's speech and behaviour. Many of these are recorded in The Spring and Autumn Annals and The Discourses of the States.

英文在详细度上更忠实于原文,但也兼顾到不同文化读者。增添in China一词使得英文得描述更加具体化,以此西方读者能理解“春秋”指中国古代具体的历史时期;英文将原文“大夫”译为the high officials,在详细度上超越了原文,而且仍然忠实原文意思,有助于读者更清楚地理解“大夫”在古代之意。

例2余童年丧父,老母命弃学举业学医,谓可以养生,可以济人,且习一艺以成名,尔父夙心也。

My father passed away in my childhood and my mother advised me to study medicine instead of seeking an official rank. She said, 'Being a doctor, you can not only support yourself but also help those in need. This was also your father's wish for you.'

“养生”一词在古汉语和现代汉语中意义相差甚远,古汉语表示“养活自己”,现指根据人的生命过程规律主动进行物质与精神的身心养护活动。英译中,原文意义得以保留,“support yourself”最大限度地忠实于原文,更符合

现代译文读者的认知习惯,便于理解和接受。

2.2 焦点化与翻译

聚焦指人们在观察事物时总会把注意力集中在事物的某个或若干个属性上面(Langacker, 2013)。识解过程聚焦的部分会受到不同文化背景、认知差异、交际目的等多种因素影响,译者应充分发挥主观能动性,对于原文情景描述的焦点做出适当调整。

例3后余在慈云寺,遇一老者,修髯伟貌,飘飘若仙,余敬礼之。

One day at the Temple of the Compassionate Cloud, I met an elder with a long neat beard and a dignified appearance. He had such an ease of bearing that I saluted him respectfully.

原文聚焦飘飘若仙的老者,在作者“立命之学”中扮演重要角色。译文在聚焦点上完全忠实于原文,用单独一句话表现出老者独特的外貌,不但准确地传递出原文信息,也恰好用聚焦弱化了其它信息。

例4远思扬祖宗之德,近思盖父母之愆。

When mindful of the past, we should extol and promote the virtue of our ancestors.

When mindful of the present, we should remedy the faults of our parents.

原文最明显的聚焦点有二:其一,达意——“立命之学”在于传承德行、孝顺父母、报效国家、造福全家;其二,形式——排比的修辞手法,内容集中、增强气势、节奏鲜明;译文在识解和重构过程中,“达意”方面忠实于原文意义;在形式方面,每句开头均为when mindful of..., we should...。译文与原文采用相同的聚焦方式,避免了意义和形式的不对等。

2.3 突显与翻译

翻译识解过程就会体现以上情况,原文某些表达模糊,或者中西方文化差异,任何翻译都不可能将原文所有意义因素完全再现。作为译者:“二者并重而以意义作基础、以意义优先”(刘宓庆,2005:25)。译者应根据不同文本类型,充分发挥主观能动性。

例5如前日杀生,今戒不杀;前日怒詈,今戒不怒。

For example, let's say I killed an animal, but

from that action onward I vow not to kill again; Or I was angry and swore at someone, but from that action onward I vow not to be angry again.

译文通过I..., but from that action onward I vow not to...最大化的突显了原文四字格押韵的形式,保留了原文要表达的排比句式;但家训体现出的教育的严肃性、强制性、感染性在追求句式的过程中仍然受到一定程度的压制。在“今戒不杀;今戒不怒”两句家训中,有强烈地发誓、立志之意,从这个角度看来,原文气势没有译出,风格受到压制。

例6人有不及,情所且矜;悖理相干,于我何与?

We should always bear in mind that everyone has his own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, when realizing another person's weaknesses, we should understand how common weaknesses are, and we should forgive the person for his shortcomings.

When someone offends us for no apparent reason, being offended is his problem and has nothing to do with us. So, there is no reason for us to get angry.

原文“于我何与?”表达作者肯定的观点,比陈述语气更加强烈。英文改用陈述句“has nothing to do with us”,突显出原文的意义,但原文要表达的强烈语气反而受到压制;英文用两组“when..., we should...”句型突显出来,意义也忠实原文。

2.4 视角与翻译

视角是指人们观察认识某个事物或情景所选择的角
度,即观察格局,体现观察者与情景之间的一种相对关系(Langacker, 1987);汉语习惯省略主语,根据语境确定主语;英语强调主语,无主语时,采用形式主语,这种差异在翻译中会涉及视角的再选择问题。

例7一日东游柳湖,偶至一村寺中。

One day, Mr. Ping went on an outing with a servant eastward to Lake Mao, and came across a Buddhist temple in a village.

原文看似缺少主语,实则与上下文语境相关。识解转换,将视角选为前一场景,即前文语境“嘉兴包凭”,本句缺少主语“包凭”,在译文中补充Mr. Ping。

例8自己已岁发愿,直至己卯岁,历十余年,而三千善行始完。

Thus, a lot of my time was wasted. It took me more than ten years to complete the 3,000 good deeds that I had vowed to do when, at the age of 35, I first took the advice of Master Yungu.

英汉表述均为“十余年”,但心理描写方向上转换导致识解视角改变。汉语习惯“十余年”表达“过去十多年”,从认知识解视角来看,是自后向前的心里扫描;而英文“more than ten years”促发从前向后的心里扫描。中英文化习惯有差异,表述习惯不同,识解过程中视角不同,视点位置也截然不同。

3 结语

本文从识解理论与翻译的关系角度展开讨论,包括具体性、焦点化、突显、视角。通过《了凡四训》举例阐释,能准确理解原作者的本意。基于以上分析,可得出如下基本结论:(1)具体性、焦点化、突显和视角识解方式,作用于识解和构建原文和译文全过程;(2)中西方文化差异造成不同人群识解方式的差异,译者应充分发挥主观能动性,通过识解重构,产生符合目的语读者认知模式的译文。

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