

The Application of the Principle of "Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance" in Prose Translation: An Example of Zhang Peiji's Translation of *Never give up the pursuit of learning*

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Abstract: The translation principle of Yan Fu's "Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance" has been studied for a long time. Different translators have different views on how to use this principle. In this paper, the author takes Zhang Peiji's translation, written by Hu Shi's *Never give up the pursuit of learning* as an example, analyzes the use of principle in Zhang's translation, and studies the application strategies of it in the prose translation.

Keywords: Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance, Prose, Application strategy.

1. Preface

Prose has played a virtual role in the history of Chinese literature. One of the characteristics of prose is that shape dispersing but spirit concentrating. (Li Ming, 2006) Unlike ancient classical text of Chinese, prose is more casual in form. So, it's difficult to grasp its profound meaning. How to reflect the characteristics of prose in translation with casual structure and accurate meaning of the text has always been a difficult point in the translation in these kinds of texts. Guided by the principle of "Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance", *Never give up the pursuit of learning* translated by Zhang Peiji has well grasped this difficult point and adopts a combination of direct translation and free translation in the whole text.

2. Introduction

2.1. *Never give up the pursuit of learning* by Hu Shi

It is from a speech prepared by Hu Shi for the graduates of the 18th grade of the China Public School, which was founded in Shanghai in April, 1906 by the revolutionaries of the late Qing Dynasty. The school was officially inaugurated by Hu Shi on April 30, 1928. As a believer of pragmatism, he wanted his students to pursue continuous academic progress and often taught them to be able to find problems, research and solve them. At the same time, he also hoped that students would not give up their studies after graduation. Thus, this speech was delivered to students at the graduation ceremony to exhort them to cherish their opportunities to study and strive to improve themselves.

2.2. Three Principles of "Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance"

"Faithfulness" means being faithful to the source texts without being bound to the wording or sentence structures of the source texts. An accurate understanding of the source text is the basic quality required of translators in the translation. Whether it is a literary translation or a non-literary translation, the understanding of the source text directly determines the translation level of a translation. The translator, as the role of

converting between two texts, is not only a simple paraphraser, but also needs to deeply appreciate the emotional tone and linguistic connotation contained in the text.

"Expressiveness" emphasizes that when translating, the translation should not only be easy to understand, but also conform to the language characteristics of the target language. Chinese and English are two different languages with great differences in their formation and development stages. When translators do English-Chinese translation, they should not only be faithful to the original language, but also consider whether the translation is acceptable to the readers of the target language. When translating, if the translator cannot achieve the principle of "faithfulness", it may cause logical confusion to the readers. In this case, the translator needs to adopt different translation strategies to make the readers understand the translation clearly and fluently.

In translation, fidelity is the first necessary condition, because it is related to the elimination of language barriers. In order to be faithful, it is necessary not only to restore the original meaning, but also to restore the style of the text, so that the translation will be elegant or vulgar. Yan Fu's "faith" means "fidelity" and overlaps with the meaning of "expressiveness". Both "faith" and "expressive" form a whole of meaning. (Lv Shisheng, 2017) Only by achieving "faith" at first, can we move to a deeper level. As a translator, he or she should try to express to the reader the connotation and emotion that the author of the original text wants to express. In the process of translation, it is important for the translator to avoid the loss of readability as much as possible. This may be the case if the translator focuses too much on emphasizing the form of the source text. Therefore, the form of the original text is often important to the translator when translating. (Ye Zinan, 2008)

"Elegance" is the highest principle of translation, and the translator should pursue the "elegance" of the text as much as possible under the condition of completing faithfulness to the original text and expressing the translator's meaning clearly. The Chinese language is profound that even Chinese idioms have different emotional colors. The principle of "elegance" requires a high level of Chinese literacy of the translator, and compared with other two principles, "elegance", as the highest level of translation, does not apply to all translators.

3. Application of the Principles of Faithfulness, Expressiveness and Elegance in Translation

3.1. Faithfulness

According to Yan Fu, the most basic principle of translation is to be faithful to the original text. In the process of translation, the translator cannot compose the text by themselves, but to convey the author's ideological and emotional connotation to the reader. So, in Zhang Peiji's translation of Never give up the pursuit of learning many details reflect this principle.

Example: 你有了决心去研究一个问题, 自然会撙衣节食去买书, 自然会想出法子来设置仪器。

Translation: As long as you set your mind on studies, you will naturally cut down on food and clothing to buy books or do everything possible to acquire necessary instruments.

In this sentence, Zhang adopts a direct translation method of "cut down on food and clothing" to save money by saving money on food and clothing. In modern society, people's consumption is multiple due to the rapid development of society. However, considering the background of the time, in 1929, China's economic development was not quicker like today, and people's consumption was single. Ordinary people mainly spent their money on "clothing" and "food". In the context of the time, the translator directly translates it as "save money for food and clothes", which reflects the "faithfulness" in the original text and conveys the author's intention to exhort students to save money for study.

Example: 易卜生说: “你的最大责任就是把你自己这块材料铸造成器。”

Translation: Henrik Ibsen says, "It is your supreme duty to cast yourself into a useful implement."

In this sentence, the author quotes Ibsen, and the translator uses a direct translation of "cast yourself into a useful implement". "Implement" means "tool; equipment". The translator did not translate it as a useful person or a successful person. It shows that faithfulness to the original text. Direct translation and free translation are the most common translation strategies in translation. This sentence is very characteristic, using "implement" to refer to "be a success". The "faithfulness" should be the same with the original text. Through direct translation, the characteristics of the original Chinese metaphor are well reflected.

3.2. Expressiveness

In *Evolution and Ethics and other Essays* - Translation Examples, translated by Yan Fu, he said, "To expressiveness, that is, so for the faithful also". (Wu Jun, 2020), (Yan Fu, 1984) On the basis of faithfulness to the original text, the translator can adjust the order of the translation, add words or subtract words in the translation. This again confirms his view that translation is not a mechanical conversion of the original text. Words that do not make sense will cause misunderstanding or confusion among readers of the target language and fail to fulfill the basic role of translation communication.

Example: 吃饭而不求学问, 三年五年之后, 你们都要被后来少年淘汰掉的。

Translation: If you give up studies while holding a job, you will in a couple of years have had yourselves replaced by younger people.

In this sentence, the word "dinner" is not the usual word for dinner, but refers to work, which the translator translated as

"job" to help readers understand the original text. The author wants to express that people should not give up their jobs in order to pursue their studies, so as not to be eliminated by society. Translating it as "job" follows the "expressiveness" in Yan Fu's translation principle.

Example: 达尔文一生多病, 不能多作工, 每天只能做一点钟的工作。

Translation: Charles Darwin could only work one hour a day due to ill health.

The original sentence contains three parts: (1) Darwin was sickly. (2) He could not work much. (3) He could only work one hour a day due to ill health. The three sentences imply cause-and-effect logic: because Darwin was ill, he could not work much, so he worked only a little hour a day. In the process of translation, the translator has cut the content of "could not work more". English does not use repetition structure and often avoids repetition by linking sentences with logical relations. In the process of translation, the translator reduces and integrates the content of the original text to avoid repetition, thus making the translation more in line with the norms of English readers.

3.3. Elegance

"Elegance" means that the translation should be appropriately worded and pursue the elegance of the text itself. (Guo Fang, 2016a) The translation is a kind of literary, elegantly written, and pays attention to rhetoric in order to show the elegant style in line with the language of the original text. The author believes that in the process of translation, the principle of "elegance" requires the translator to have a high literary quality in English and Chinese, which is the highest level of translation.

Example: 至于时间, 更不成问题。

Translation: Time is no object.

This sentence is a small phrase with simple content. But because its style is similar to verbal language, in the process of translation, the translator put it as "Time is no object", which retains the characteristics of verbal language in the original text and the casual style of prose form, so that the reader, though culturally different from the author, can also the author feels the tone of verbal advice.

Example: 你们看他的成绩!

Translation: Yet what a remarkable man he was!

By giving the example of Ibsen, the author exhorts students to spend even a little time every day to accumulate learning. The exclamation mark shows the author's exclamatory tone. In the process of translation, the translator not only expresses the tone of the translation through exclamations, but also strengthens the exclamatory tone and emphasizes the author's emotion through the preposition of "yet".

4. Summary

The most important characteristic of prose is that it has a loose form but not a loose connotation, and the form is casual, without the restraint of other texts, but it can convey the author's ideological connotation as well. In the process of translation, the translator should not only firmly grasp the ideological connotation, emotion and style of the source text, but also pay attention to whether the translated text can be accepted by the target language readers and play the role of a "bridge" of communication. Being able to achieve "faithfulness" and "expressiveness" is the basic quality of the translator. As the highest requirement for translation,

"elegance" requires translators to accumulate and enrich their literary and linguistic skills in their translations and improve their literacy.

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