

A Comparative Analysis of Translation Strategies for Cross-cultural Communication Texts Based on Corpus

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Abstract: *This paper aims to explore the application of corpus - based methods in analyzing translation strategies for cross - cultural communication texts. By constructing and analyzing relevant corpora, it compares different translation strategies, aiming to provide theoretical and practical guidance for improving the quality of cross - cultural communication text translation. Through the study, it is found that different translation strategies have their own advantages and disadvantages in different text types and cultural backgrounds, and the choice of translation strategies should be comprehensively considered based on various factors such as text purpose, target audience, and cultural connotations.*

Keywords: Corpus, Cross - cultural communication, Translation strategies, Comparative analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, cross - cultural communication has become increasingly frequent. As an important means of cross - cultural communication, translation plays a crucial role in promoting the exchange of different cultures. However, due to the differences in language, culture, and thinking patterns between different countries and regions, translation of cross - cultural communication texts often faces many challenges.

The traditional translation research mainly focuses on the analysis of individual translation cases, which is lack of systematicness and objectivity. With the development of computer technology and corpus linguistics, corpus - based translation research has emerged as the times require. By collecting and analyzing a large number of real - world translation texts, corpus - based research can provide more objective and accurate data support for translation studies, helping translators better understand the characteristics and laws of translation, and thus select more appropriate translation strategies.

This study focuses on the comparative analysis of translation strategies for cross - cultural communication texts based on corpus, aiming to explore the application of corpus in translation research, and provide new ideas and methods for improving the quality of cross - cultural communication text translation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Corpus Linguistics and Its Application in Translation Research

Corpus linguistics emerged in the 1960s and has developed rapidly in recent decades. A corpus is a large - scale collection of texts that are selected and organized according to certain principles. These texts can be from various sources, such as literary works, newspapers, magazines, and online texts. Corpus linguistics uses computer - assisted methods to analyze the language features and usage patterns in corpora, providing a new perspective and method for language research.

In translation research, the application of corpus has brought many advantages. Baker (1993) pointed out that corpus can help translators better understand the source text and target text, and find more appropriate translation equivalents. By comparing the source text corpus and the target text corpus, translators can discover the differences in language usage and cultural connotations between the two languages, and then adjust the translation strategies accordingly. For example, through corpus analysis, it is found that in English - Chinese translation, some English idioms need to be translated flexibly according to the context and cultural background, rather than being translated literally.

In recent years, with the continuous improvement of corpus technology, more and more scholars have used corpus

to study translation strategies. Zanettin (2000) constructed a parallel corpus of English and Italian translations to analyze the translation strategies of idiomatic expressions. The results showed that corpus - based analysis can effectively reveal the translation strategies used by translators and provide reference for translation teaching and practice.

2.2 Research on Translation Strategies for Cross - cultural Communication Texts

Translation strategies refer to the methods and techniques used by translators to deal with various translation problems in the translation process. For cross - cultural communication texts, due to the complexity of cultural factors, the choice of translation strategies is particularly important.

Nida (1964) proposed the concept of "dynamic equivalence" in translation, emphasizing that the translation should focus on the equivalent effect of the target text and the source text in terms of meaning and function, rather than strict formal equivalence. In cross - cultural communication text translation, this concept has important guiding significance. For example, when translating cultural - loaded words, translators can use free translation or annotation methods to make the target text readers understand the cultural connotations of the source text.

Venuti (1995) put forward the translation strategies of "domestication" and "foreignization". Domestication means to make the translation conform to the language and cultural habits of the target language, making the translation smooth and easy to understand for the target text readers. Foreignization, on the contrary, tries to retain the original language and cultural features of the source text, so that the target text readers can experience the cultural differences of the source text. In cross - cultural communication text translation, the choice between domestication and foreignization depends on various factors such as the purpose of translation, the target audience, and the cultural background of the source text.

In recent research, scholars have also combined corpus - based methods with translation strategy research. For example, Xiao (2018) used a parallel corpus to analyze the translation strategies of Chinese cultural - loaded words in English - Chinese translation. It was found that translators often use a combination of literal translation, free translation, and annotation methods to deal with cultural - loaded words, and the choice of translation strategies is related to the frequency and difficulty of cultural - loaded words.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Corpus Construction

In this study, two parallel corpora were constructed: a source text corpus and a target text corpus. The source text corpus was composed of cross - cultural communication texts in Chinese, including news reports, literary works, and official documents related to cross - cultural communication. These texts were collected from various sources, such as Chinese newspapers, magazines, and online platforms. The target text corpus was the English translations of the source texts, which were obtained from professional translation works, translation databases, and online translation platforms.

The construction of the corpus followed the principles of representativeness, balance, and size. The representativeness means that the texts in the corpus can represent different types and styles of cross - cultural communication texts. The balance requires that the corpus contains texts from different fields and time periods. In terms of size, the corpus was large enough to ensure the reliability of the analysis results. After collecting the texts, they were pre - processed, including text cleaning, segmentation, and part - of - speech tagging, to facilitate subsequent corpus analysis.

3.2 Data Analysis Tools

To analyze the corpora, several data analysis tools were used. AntConc is a widely used corpus analysis software, which can perform functions such as word frequency statistics, keyword extraction, and collocation analysis. In this study, AntConc was used to calculate the word frequency and keyword frequency in the source text corpus and the target text corpus, and to analyze the collocation patterns of words.

In addition, a machine translation evaluation tool, BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy), was also used. BLEU can evaluate the quality of machine translation by comparing the candidate translation with the reference

translation. Although this study mainly focuses on human translation strategies, BLEU can be used as a reference to evaluate the fluency and accuracy of translations in the target text corpus.

3.3 Analysis Methods

The research adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Quantitatively, through corpus analysis software, data such as word frequency, sentence length, and type - token ratio in the source text corpus and the target text corpus were statistically analyzed. These data can reflect the basic language characteristics of the two corpora, such as the frequency of use of certain words, the length of sentences, and the richness of vocabulary.

Qualitatively, specific translation cases in the corpus were selected for in - depth analysis. By comparing the source text and the target text, the translation strategies used by translators, such as literal translation, free translation, domestication, and foreignization, were analyzed and evaluated. In addition, the cultural connotations in the source text and how they were transferred in the target text were also explored.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Linguistic Feature Analysis of Cross - cultural Communication Texts

4.1.1 Word Frequency Analysis

The word frequency analysis of the source text corpus and the target text corpus showed some differences. In the Chinese source text corpus, function words such as "的", "了", "是" appeared with high frequency, which is in line with the characteristics of the Chinese language. In the English target text corpus, function words such as "the", "and", "of" had high frequencies. In terms of content words, in Chinese cross - cultural communication texts, words related to culture, such as "文化", "传统", "习俗", often appeared. In the English translations, corresponding words like "culture", "tradition", "custom" also had relatively high frequencies, but the collocation patterns were different. For example, in Chinese, "传统文化" is a common collocation, while in English, "traditional culture" is the corresponding expression, but the frequency of "traditional" collocating with other words related to culture may vary.

4.1.2 Sentence Length Analysis

The average sentence length in the Chinese source text corpus was shorter than that in the English target text corpus. Chinese cross - cultural communication texts often use short and concise sentences, which are in line with the Chinese language's habit of expressing ideas in a more straightforward way. In contrast, English translations tend to use longer sentences, often with complex syntactic structures such as relative clauses and participial phrases. This is related to the differences in the syntactic characteristics of the two languages. English emphasizes the formal connection of sentences, while Chinese pays more attention to the semantic coherence between sentences.

4.2 Analysis of Translation Strategies

4.2.1 Literal Translation and Free Translation

In the translation of cross - cultural communication texts, literal translation and free translation are two commonly used strategies. Literal translation attempts to retain the form and structure of the source text as much as possible in the translation. For example, in the translation of some Chinese idioms with relatively clear cultural connotations and simple structures, such as "一见钟情", it is often translated as "fall in love at first sight" in English, which is a literal translation. This translation method can retain the original image and cultural flavor of the source text to a certain extent.

Free translation, on the other hand, focuses on expressing the meaning of the source text, rather than strictly following the form of the source text. For example, the Chinese expression "三个臭皮匠，顶个诸葛亮" is difficult to translate literally because there is no equivalent cultural image in English. Therefore, it is often translated as "Two heads are better than one", which is a free translation that conveys the core meaning of the

source text.

Through corpus analysis, it was found that in cross - cultural communication text translation, translators often use a combination of literal translation and free translation. For some expressions with relatively universal cultural connotations, literal translation is more likely to be used; while for expressions with strong cultural uniqueness, free translation is more common.

4.2.2 Domestication and Foreignization

Domestication and foreignization are two important translation strategies related to cultural transfer. Domestication aims to make the translation conform to the cultural and language habits of the target language. For example, in the translation of some Chinese cultural terms, if there are similar concepts in English, translators may use existing English words to translate. When translating "太极拳" into English, it can be translated as "Taijiquan" (foreignization) or "shadowboxing" (domestication). The latter translation uses an English word that is more familiar to English - speaking people, making it easier for them to understand.

Foreignization, as mentioned before, tries to retain the original cultural features of the source text. In the translation of Chinese cross - cultural communication texts, for some unique cultural terms, translators may choose to use transliteration or add annotations to introduce Chinese culture to English - speaking readers. For example, when translating "饺子", it is often translated as "jiaozi" with an annotation explaining what it is, which is a foreignization strategy.

The choice between domestication and foreignization in the corpus was also analyzed. It was found that when the target audience has little knowledge of Chinese culture, domestication may be more frequently used to ensure the readability and understandability of the translation. However, with the increasing popularity of Chinese culture around the world, foreignization is also being used more and more to promote the spread of Chinese culture.

4.3 Influence of Cultural Factors on Translation Strategies

Cultural factors play a crucial role in the choice of translation strategies for cross - cultural communication texts. Different cultures have different values, beliefs, and ways of thinking, which are reflected in language expressions.

For example, in Chinese culture, there is a strong sense of collectivism, and language expressions often reflect this cultural feature. In the translation of relevant texts, translators need to consider how to transfer this cultural connotation. In some Chinese family - related texts, the description of family relationships is very detailed, and the translation needs to accurately convey these cultural - specific concepts. In contrast, Western cultures emphasize individualism, and the translation should also adapt to this cultural difference.

Another example is the cultural connotations of animals. In Chinese culture, the dragon is a symbol of power and auspiciousness, but in Western cultures, the dragon is often regarded as a fierce and evil creature. When translating texts related to the dragon, translators need to carefully choose translation strategies to avoid misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLATION PRACTICE AND TEACHING

5.1 Implications for Translation Practice

The results of this study have important implications for translation practice. First, translators should be aware of the differences in language and culture between the source language and the target language, and choose appropriate translation strategies according to the specific situation. When translating cross - cultural communication texts, they should not simply rely on literal translation or a single translation strategy, but should comprehensively consider factors such as the purpose of translation, the target audience, and cultural connotations.

Second, corpus - based methods can be used as an important tool for translation practice. By consulting relevant corpora, translators can understand the common translation methods of similar texts, find appropriate translation equivalents, and improve the quality and efficiency of translation. For example, when translating a new cross - cultural communication text, translators can search in the corpus for similar expressions and their translations, and

then make appropriate adjustments according to the specific context.

5.2 Implications for Translation Teaching

In translation teaching, the findings of this study can also provide useful guidance. Teachers can introduce corpus - based translation research methods to students, so that students can learn to use corpus tools to analyze and study translations. Through corpus analysis, students can more objectively understand the language and cultural differences between different languages, and master various translation strategies.

For example, in the classroom, teachers can guide students to use corpus analysis software to analyze the translation strategies used in a certain type of cross - cultural communication texts. Students can calculate word frequencies, analyze sentence structures, and compare different translations, so as to deepen their understanding of translation strategies and improve their translation ability. In addition, teachers can also use real - world translation cases from the corpus to design translation exercises, allowing students to practice using appropriate translation strategies in different contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

This study, based on corpus, has conducted a comparative analysis of translation strategies for cross - cultural communication texts. Through corpus construction, data analysis, and case studies, it has explored the linguistic features of cross - cultural communication texts, analyzed common translation strategies such as literal translation, free translation, domestication, and foreignization, and discussed the influence of cultural factors on translation strategies.

The results show that different translation strategies have their own applicability in different text types and cultural backgrounds. In translation practice, translators should comprehensively consider various factors to choose the most appropriate translation strategies. At the same time, corpus - based methods provide a new perspective and tool for translation research and practice, which can help improve the quality of cross - cultural communication text translation.

However, this study also has some limitations. For example, the size and scope of the corpus constructed in this study are still limited, which may affect the universality of the research results to a certain extent. In future research, larger - scale and more comprehensive corpora can be constructed, and more in - depth studies can be carried out on specific types of cross - cultural communication texts and translation strategies.

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