Cognitive Strategies of Political Metaphor Translation in Political Literature

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Abstract: Metaphor has been an indispensable element of academic research for a long time because of its vivid and indirect characteristics. Since the 1980s, metaphor has been incorporated into the problem of human thinking, marking the "cognitive turn" of metaphor research, and gradually formed a relatively perfect theoretical system. Cognitive linguistics studies how language features reflect human cognitive behavior, so metaphor has always been the core research topic of cognitive linguistics. However, compared with the endless study of conceptual metaphor theory, the study of metaphor translation, especially political metaphor translation, is relatively few and not deep enough. This paper takes political metaphor and its translation as the research object, discusses the characteristics of political metaphor, and constructs its translation strategies, in order to provide theoretical guidance for the future study of political discourse translation.

1. Introduction

In recent years, metaphor, as an important mode of thinking and cognition, has attracted much attention of researchers. There are a lot of metaphors hidden in political literature, which have become an indispensable way of expression. Political discourse is the language behavior of political communication, and political metaphor carries the cultural connotation of political discourse. It can analyze the political ideology and political thought behind political discourse, and provide theoretical basis for the deep understanding of political discourse. Wen Xu pointed out that metaphor plays an important role in political discourse because it can frame political issues in a specific mode, set the direction of problem solving, and thus provide an explanatory framework to influence political decisions [1]. On the other hand, translation is also an activity of expressing one language into another. From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, translation is a practical activity with cognitive attributes, and the two have something in common. However, compared with metaphor studies and political discourse studies, the academic circles pay insufficient attention to the translation of political metaphors. In view of this, this paper takes political metaphor and its translation as the research object, discusses the characteristics of political metaphor, and constructs its translation strategies, with a view to providing theoretical support for future political discourse translation studies.

2. Research on the Development of Metaphor Theory

The academic research on metaphor has a long history, which can be traced back to Aristotle's time. At first, it belongs to the category of rhetoric, thinking that metaphor is only an expression at the language level. However, after the 1980s, people's understanding of metaphor has changed fundamentally, realizing the cognitive turn of linguistics. It is considered as the foundation of human conceptual system and one of the basic mechanisms of human thinking ability [2]. Lakoff & Johnson published in 1980 the book Metaphor We Live by, which re-examined and studied metaphor in the fields of human behavior, thinking mode, conceptual category and language signs, and put forward the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). According to this theory, metaphor is a cognitive way, using one cognitive domain to know and understand another cognitive domain. Thinking, reasoning and organizing discourse to explain through conceptual metaphor can not only reveal the conceptualization results of discourse producers, but also correctly understand their positions and values [3]. CMT's theoretical framework has become the driving force for the development of cognitive linguistics [4], which illustrates the importance of metaphor, which exists in people's language and thinking. Later, Lakoff put forward the research paradigm of Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (CTM) in 1993, and achieved theoretical improvement and evolution [5]. The research object of metaphor from traditional rhetoric has become the research object of many disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, semantics, cognitive science and translation studies. This fully shows that the role of metaphor has been paid more and more attention in the process of human cognitive society.

The classification of metaphor has always been the core issue of metaphor research, which needs further in-depth analysis and scientific definition. According to Lakoff and Johnson's analysis, metaphor can be roughly divided into three categories: structural metaphor, locative metaphor and ontological metaphor. Structural metaphor refers to mapping the structure of the source domain to the structure of the target domain, so that the speaker can understand another cognitive domain with the help of one cognitive domain. Directional metaphor is a metaphor based on spatial orientation, which indicates that two concepts are related to each other in space. The origin domain of ontological metaphor is the objective world entity, and the target domain is activity, emotion or viewpoint. Personification is the basic form of ontological metaphor. This theory explains the generation mechanism of conceptual metaphor by using the experience philosophy, emphasizing that conceptual metaphor comes from the co-occurrence of source domain and target domain in people's daily experience [6]. However, Szwedek pointed out that this classification only analyzes the ontological attributes of the original domain, and there is no clear standard, lacking in sufficiency [7]. Zhang Songsong put forward four metaphor classification standards from four aspects: metaphor ontology, metaphor hierarchy, metaphor operation and literary metaphor [8]. Ding Fang divides metaphors into several different categories, such as explicit metaphor (simile) and implicit metaphor, root metaphor and derivative metaphor, metaphor based on similarity, and metaphor creating similarity, from the perspectives of their manifestations, functions and effects, and cognitive characteristics [9]. With the deepening of research, the classification of metaphor has been constantly improved and updated.

3. Political Discourse and Political Metaphor Translation

The research on political discourse in academic circles at home and abroad has been very rich, and the research has experienced a change from focusing on the form and structure of discourse to focusing on the function and cognition of discourse, showing two major trends: multi-dimensional perspective and cognitive research [10]. Metaphor is undoubtedly the best choice for politicians to talk about political issues. In political discourse, metaphor is a conventional way of thinking [11]. Political metaphor recognizes the concept or experience of another cognitive domain through the

concept or experience of one cognitive domain, and gives new meaning and connotation to political discourse. In this way, metaphor turns abstract and complicated political discourse into simple and understandable concrete concepts in political discourse, thus more efficiently conveying the ruling idea of national leaders and the political thoughts behind them. In other words, politicians map abstract, complex and invisible political ideas with concrete, easy-to-understand and visible things in political discourse, so that the public can understand complex political issues, stimulate their emotions, guide their political inclination and achieve their political goals. It can be seen that political metaphor is an indispensable expression of senior political discourse, which reflects the cultural connotation and ideology of political discourse. As the carrier of political discourse, political metaphor embodies cultural connotations such as traditional culture and values, which can inspire people's feelings and guide mainstream ideology, and it is an indispensable field in the construction of foreign discourse system [12].

Metaphor has always been a difficult problem for translators. Because metaphors have different types and attributes, these factors set up many obstacles for translation. Metaphor translation is the transformation between two languages, and the cultural differences between languages inevitably hinder this transformation process, thus making metaphor translation a difficult point. However, political discourse is different from other texts. Politicians communicate with the people through language and attitude to achieve their purpose of persuasion. Therefore, the translation of political metaphors in political discourse is more difficult, and it is particularly important to construct cognitive strategies for the translation of political metaphors.

4. Cognitive Strategies of Political Metaphor Translation

4.1. Cognitive Translation View

Translation studies started early in foreign countries, with Schffner, Van den Broeck, Mason, Mandelblit, Newmark, etc. as the representatives. Schffner emphasizes that the key point of cognitive translation is that metaphor is not only a modifier, but also the basic resource of human social thought process. Metaphor translation is no longer just about finding the equivalence between different languages, but about finding the equivalence between two conceptual systems. Newmark puts forward six types of metaphor and seven translation strategies. Mandelblit puts forward "cognitive translation hypothesis", which holds that according to the different cognitive modes of readers' thinking, it can be divided into similar mapping conditions (SMC) and different mapping conditions (DMC). Metaphor translation is to choose 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, the translation should keep the metaphorical image in the source language for literal translation. When the conceptual domain of metaphor in the source language is quite different from the target language, we can change the metaphorical image of the source language and adopt free translation and additional translation.

Specifically, in the process of political metaphor translation, literal translation can be directly used to translate expressions derived from the common psychological experience and language habits of many nationalities. However, based on the unique expression habits of Chinese, metaphor also has strong Chinese characteristics and is closely related to China's politics, economy and society. Therefore, in the process of political metaphor translation, when aiming at special metaphorical words with strong Chinese cultural characteristics, it is sometimes necessary to add appropriate meanings on the basis of literal translation.

4.2. 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 discourse is of great significance to the construction of diplomatic discourse system of a big country with Chinese characteristics. However, due to the differences in ideology, social culture, political ecology, etc. among countries, foreign countries have misunderstandings about China's internal government affairs and diplomatic thoughts, which are easy to be misunderstood. Therefore, the translation of political discourse needs interdisciplinary awareness and theoretical support to analyze China's external image. Hu Kaibao believes that the transmission ways and effects of political discourse will be the research focus for a long time to come [13]. Based on Yang Mingxing's equivalence theory and practice, he put forward the principle of political equivalence, arguing that translators who translate political discourse must accurately and faithfully reflect the political thoughts and contexts of the original text and the original author, and at the same time express them 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 functions [14]. Newmark pointed out that political discourse and literature are "expressive texts", taking semantic translation as the main line. When translating, we should follow the faithfulness of translation and make certain "concessions" according to the cognition of the target readers [15]. Long Xinyuan and Li Qiuxia put forward the compound translation standard (PECC) of "political equivalence+cognitive convergence" from the theoretical perspective of cognitive translation [16]. To sum up, political equivalence is the most basic principle that we should follow when translating political discourse.

On the other hand, word meaning and context are related to each other. Communication can't be separated from the specific language environment, and word meanings have different contextual meanings in different contexts. To understand a country's political discourse, it is necessary to connect it with the context. Only in this way can the accurate connotation of the word be correctly expressed. Therefore, contextual interpretation is an effective translation method of political metaphors. According to the traditional view of context, context includes language environment and non-language 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 in addition to linguistic environment and non-linguistic environment. Cognitive context is dynamic, which is the result of the speaker's continuous choice in the process of understanding. Interpretation is to change the wording from one language plane to another without changing the original meaning. Therefore, the translation of political metaphors should be based on political equivalence and combined with context, especially cognitive context, to complete anaphoric interpretation.

5. Conclusion

Political metaphor expresses politicians' attitudes, thoughts and ruling ideas, and builds a common ideology and personal image. From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, political metaphor plays an extremely important role. Effective metaphor translation can realize the transformation of discourse value and play an important role in the process of spreading Chinese internal and external ideas, so political metaphor translation is particularly important. Political discourse translation has its own particularity. Only by grasping readers' cognitive ability can we have a definite purpose and realize the functions of text communication and political culture transmission. Therefore, on the basis of describing the characteristics of political metaphors, this paper, from the perspective of cognitive translation, puts forward metaphor translation strategies based on the context interpretation of political equivalence, in order to better guide the translation practice of political discourse. Translation teaching is one of the important ways to cultivate translation talents. The research of

translation theory can effectively guide translation teaching, and political metaphor translation provides a new teaching method for translation teaching. Although this paper discusses the strategies of political metaphor translation at the macro level, the deficiency lies in the failure to combine metaphor translation methods with translation teaching, and insufficient attention to text translation. In the future research, the author will focus on the development of macro-discourse and micro-structure to enhance the cognition of political metaphor translation, so as to promote the application of translation cognition in translation teaching.

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