

Research and Strategies of English Prepositions—Take the Practice of Level 2 Translation in the 2023 China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters as an Example

Qinghui Meng

Yangzhou University, Yangzhou, Jiangsu, 225009, China

Keywords: Preposition; Translation strategies; Level 2 Practice of China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters

Abstract: With the development of global trade, world communication is increasingly extensive, and language has become a bridge to promote world communication, playing an increasingly important role. However, due to the differences in development background, cultural background and language understanding among countries, translators also play an indispensable role in transnational development in order to reduce the obstacles of heavy communication. English is the mother tongue of most western countries, and prepositions are often used in English, which is far more numerous than Chinese and more widely and flexibly used than Chinese. The understanding of these prepositions can reflect the translation level of translators. This paper, taking the translation practice of Level 2 of the China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters as an example, focuses on the translation strategies of prepositions from the perspectives of vocabulary, syntax and text, such as translation, omission, addition, reverse translation, separation and inversion.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the communication between China and other countries is becoming more and more frequent and deeper, and the market demand for translation is bound to rise day by day, and the requirements for translation quality are also increasing. Therefore, it is the unshirkable responsibility of translators, teachers and scholars to further study translation skills and improve translation quality and effect. If English complex sentence patterns are copied in the process of English-Chinese translation, the Chinese translation will not be able to accurately express the internal logical relations of the original text, such as antecedent and result, general statement and partial statement, which will make it difficult for readers to understand or even misunderstand. The treatment of preposition structure in English-Chinese translation will determine the translation effect and cannot be ignored. Translators must analyze the internal relations between English prepositions on the basis of accurate understanding of the original text, and then use appropriate translation strategies to process them according to specific situations, so as to achieve more accurate and readable English-Chinese meaning expression[1-3].

There are 63 prepositions in Modern Chinese Dictionary and 83 prepositions in Modern Chinese

Standard Dictionary. According to Yao Hong's statistics, English prepositions are more abundant, with a number of 80-100, while Chinese prepositions are relatively simple, with a number of about 43. Page 702 of the Modern Chinese Dictionary states that prepositions are placed in front of prepositions of nouns, pronouns or noun phrases to indicate directions. English prepositions can be divided into four categories: simple introduction, synthetic preposition, participle preposition, phrase preposition and double preposition. Preposition is a more active word in English, followed by nouns, pronouns, etc., and its translation method is usually directly translated into “de”. It is precisely because prepositions in English cannot be expressed in Chinese, resulting in a series of obscure translations due to the inflexible translation of prepositions. After study the specific data, it is found that the English text has a total of 6,465 words, with an average sentence length of 46.47 and a word density of 47.34%, of which nouns account for 28.43%, prepositions account for 12.46% and adjectives account for 9.85%, while the reference translation only contains 1,670 Chinese characters, with nouns accounting for 46.17% and adjectives accounting for 9.85%. From the above data, it is not difficult to find that English sentence patterns are complex, and prepositions are used very frequently except nouns. Chinese verb nouns account for almost 70% of the text, which shows that Chinese likes dynamic verbs[4].

2. The Translation Strategies of Prepositions at Lexical Level

2.1 Lexical Translation Strategy-Conversion Method

Conversion is one of the common translation strategies in English. Conversion mainly refers to the conversion of words into parts of speech, such as prepositions into verbs, conjunctions, adverbs, adjectives, nouns, adjectives and so on. English contains many static verbs, while Chinese contains many dynamic words, so the conversion of prepositions into verbs is also a common expression method in translation. By adopting Conversion strategy, the original text can be made more fluent and popular. Liu Miqing said that all English prepositions can get the meaning of Chinese verbs, and 50% of English prepositions can be converted into verbs in English-Chinese translation. This paper takes sentence in CATTI's secondary translation practice in 2023 as an example:

This is a strategy for making women's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

This strategy aims to incorporate women's concerns and experiences as an indispensable factor into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and plans in all political, economic and social fields, so as to ensure that men and women benefit equally[5].

Among them, “for” and “in” are both prepositions. When translating “This is a strategy for making women's concerns and experiences ...”, it is not translated as “this strategy is to make women care and experience”, and “for” is translated as “aim”, which obviously changes the part of speech of the original preposition into a verb. When translating “in all political, economic and social spheres”, the translation does not translate it into “in political, economic and social fields”, but it is flexibly converted into “inclusion” by changing the part of speech “in”, and the preposition is also converted into a verb here. Flexible transformation, the translation also appears concise and powerful, rather than obscure[6].

The advantages of preposition translation method are obvious. Apart from the flexibility and ingenuity of the above methods, it is also worth noting that an English sentence often contains more than one preposition. In many cases, multiple prepositions will appear at the same time. Relevant strategies and methods will be mentioned below. Besides translation, another common preposition translation strategy is omission[7].

2.2 Lexical Translation Strategy-Omission Translation Method

In 2023, the most frequently used method in CATTI text is provincial translation, which means that prepositions are not given any meaning, and prepositions are only used to realize grammatical functions in sentences. The common provincial translation is used when translating time and place, such as “in 1965, The Science Advisory Committee raised concerns about man made climate change”, usually, the translator translates it as” 1965”, omitting its original intention, thus making the original text more concise and powerful.

While it is tempting to be for or against climate engineering, what decision makers need to do now is to gather scientific facts and ask as many questions as possible about what the deployment of these technologies might mean for individuals, societies, nations and regions[8].

Although it is not difficult to make a decision to support or oppose climate engineering, what policymakers need to do now is to collect scientific facts and ask as many questions as possible: What does it mean for individuals, societies, countries and regions to adopt these technologies?

The prepositions “about” and “of” in the sentence are all prepositions, but the translation does not translate their lexical meaning. These two words only have grammatical functions in the sentence. As long as the prepositions only have grammatical meanings in the text, omitting translation is a preferred translation strategy. There are many examples of provincial translation in this paper, which are not listed here. Usually, the changes in provincial translation are that the nouns after prepositions are advanced, or the nouns before prepositions are changed into verbs, such as “equality between women and men working in the media” and “participation in the media”, which are translated as "gender equality of media practitioners" and “participation in media work” respectively. In a word, the final translation should conform to the characteristics of Chinese, be easy to understand and realize the communication function of translation.

2.3 Lexical Translation Strategy-Amplification Method

Amplification Method refers to adding appropriate words without changing the original text, so that the translation is easy to understand and concise. Amplification Method is applied to a certain purpose, not an arbitrary one. There are not many examples of Amplification Method in the text, but Amplification Method is still a good method of translation.

The latter emphasizes the key role of the media to promote gender equality in all spheres. Emphasis is placed on the key role played by the media in promoting gender equality in all fields[9].

The original intention of the article is “the key role of the media in various fields”, but the translation adds the word “the role of the media in various fields”. The meaning of the sentence obviously emphasizes the importance of the media, and it does not have the effect of the original sentence according to the original intention. In order to make the meaning of the sentence stand out clearly, the words added in the text play a role in a certain way, which can realize the meaning of the original sentence. Therefore, the preposition “in” is not just translated as “in” but added as “playing”. The translation highlights the theme effectively[10].

2.4 Lexical Translation Strategy-Reverse Translation Method

Reverse translation generally refers to transforming negative sentences into positive sentences, and vice versa. There are negative words in the original text, but positive words in the translation. The flexible application of reverse translation will often make the translation achieve unexpected results. For example, Professor Wei Han once pointed out that “reverse translation makes the expression more refined and smooth, and the transition between words is natural, so as not to

produce abrupt and awkward feelings.” For example, “The boat sank off the coast” is translated as “the ship sank not too far from the coast”. The original “off” means to leave, but the translation is cleverly translated into a place not too far away, which not only covers the meaning of leaving but also has no negative meaning[11].

All parties are called to join forces to combat “stereotyping of women and inequality in women’s access to and participation in the media”.

Call on all parties to work together to prevent “stereotyping of women and women’s unequal access to media information and participation in media work”. In this paper, “inequality in women’s access to” itself contains the negative word “inequality”. However, there is no negative sentence in the translation, but it is transformed into an affirmative sentence “can’t”, which realizes smooth and refined expression[12].

3. The Translation Strategies of Prepositions at Syntactic Level

3.1 Syntactic Translation Strategy-Separation Method

Separation method refers to the separation of the sentence where the preposition is located from the main part of the sentence and processing it separately to express the meaning of the sentence. The common way is to put the removed components at the beginning of the sentence, at the end of the sentence, or wrap them in the sentence. This is also in line with the characteristics of concise and short Chinese. English sentences are long, and it is customary to use a word or phrase to express a layer of meaning, which is layered to form a long sentence; In Chinese, verbs or short sentences with verbs are often used to express them. Therefore, some English prepositional phrases can be translated into sentences[13].

There are real risks to using or rejecting climate engineering. Whether climate engineering is adopted or rejected, the risks are real. “to” is a preposition, but the reference translation puts forward the preposition separately and treats it as adverbial clause, and the preposition is transformed from lexical level to syntactic level, thus achieving the effect of separate translation. The flexible use of split translation gives the translation a clear context and conciseness.

3.2 Syntactic Translation Strategy-Inversion Method

Inversion refers to the proper adjustment of word order based on the background of the source text and the expression habits of the target language.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world[14].

Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but also a necessary foundation for building a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

This is the first sentence in CATTI’s two practices in 2023, in which the original “A necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.” skillfully uses inversion method to adjust the postposition “for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world” to the preposition “a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world”.

4. Translation Strategies of Preposition at Text Level

On the whole, the preposition translation strategies analyzed from lexical level and syntactic level are intended to convey the meaning of the text, but at the text level, one of the factors that can not be ignored-style-has not been mentioned. The famous American translator Nida defined translation in the late 1960s: the so-called translation is to reproduce the source language with the

closest and most natural equivalent in the target language, first in meaning, then in style (quoted from Si Hui) Although compared with meaning, style takes second place, it does not mean that style can be ignored. In the process of translation, we should not only take the principle of loyalty as the basic criterion to ensure that the translation can accurately retain the connotation of the original text and convey its content, form and style completely and smoothly; At the same time, interpreters are also required to have a high degree of political awareness and sensitivity. In contrast to literary translation, You Yi said that in the process of translation, by using appropriate translation strategies, we can ensure that literature accurately restores the original, maintains the aesthetic feeling of literature, ensures the integration with readers' horizons, maintains the cultural value of literature and grasps the initiative of foreign translation. Different styles require different characteristics, so we should make flexible adjustments when translating prepositions[15].

5. Conclusion

Preposition translation is very flexible, and prepositions have become a major difficulty for translators in translation examination. Preposition not only expresses the relationship between words, but also has its own ideographic function, which depends on the translator's experience and makes great efforts in subtlety. This paper takes CATTI's two practices as the research text, and analyzes the translation methods of prepositions at three levels: vocabulary, syntax and text. Its include translation, omission, addition and reverse translation at lexical level, subject theme translation and inversion at syntactic level, and stylistic translation at textual level. However, there are still some shortcomings in this paper. The research text is only limited to the 2023 CATTI exam text, and the research object is too narrow. And the translation methods of different texts are not all mentioned. These regrets need to be further extended and expanded.

References

- [1] Chen Ke and Liu Yiming. *A Study on the Translation of Prepositions in Offshore Oil English Texts. Modern business trade industry.* 2023, 5:64-66.
- [2] Huang Xiaoxi and Hu Jian. *A Study on the English Translation of Chinese Temporal and Spatial Preposition "zai"—A Dream of Red Mansions and its English translation as an example. Journal of Suzhou University.* 2020, 35:6.
- [3] Wei Han. *Functional Recognition of English Preposition Phrases and Its Teaching Application in Translation. Journal of Harbin Vocational and Technical College.* 2021, 4: 139-141.
- [4] Lu Bin. *A Pragmatic Study of English Intermediaries.* Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Publishing House. 2007. 7-9.
- [5] Liu Jinfeng. *A Study of Prepositions in Modern Chinese Dictionary (5th Edition).* Chinese Teaching Newsletter. 2011: 153-156.
- [6] Li Chenming. *Category Transformation in Translation of Complex Structures in English Long Sentences.* Liaoning Normal University. 2023:63.
- [7] Liu Miqing. *Literature and Translation.* China Foreign Translation Publishing Co., Ltd. 2012: 290-292.
- [8] Liu Miqing. *Style and Translation.* Beijing: Higher Education Press. 1989. 401.
- [9] Liang Yumeng. *Chinese Translation Strategies from Translation Shifts Theory's Perspective—Taking the real questions of CATTI English Secondary Translation over the years as an example. Modern English.* 2023, 12:110-113.
- [10] Si Huiqi. *A Probe into the Preparation Strategies of CATTI English Translation Level 3. Overseas English.* 2022, 14: 65-66.
- [11] Xu Xin. *A Multidimensional Analysis of English Preposition Translation. English Square.* 2021, 3:4.
- [12] Wang Si. *Translation Strategies of Preposition and Preposition Structure from the Perspective of Functional Equivalence Theory. Nanjing University of Information Science & Technology.* 2023:13.
- [13] Xiong Liben. *A Study on Translation Strategies of Characteristic Vocabulary in Political Papers from the Perspective of Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory —Taking the 2018 Government Work Report as an Example. English Square.* 2020, 22:30-32.
- [14] You Yi. *A Probe into English Translation Strategies of China Literature Based on Deep Translation Theory. Journal of Hebei Normal University.* 2021, 3:91-92.
- [15] Wei Zhang. *Comparative Empirical Analysis of Manual Translation, Machine Translation and Post-translation Editing—Taking Chinese Preposition Structure Translation as an Example. Journal of Shenyang Normal University.* 2021, 5:7.