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Translation Theories and Strategies---Taking the Translation of Sainsbury's Company Profile as an Example

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ABSTRACT

With the development of globalization, more and more companies start to invest in other countries. The translation of company profile plays an important role in establishing a perfect image of a company. Based on translation theories, this paper takes the company profile translation of Sainsbury's as an example to analyze the translation problems and solutions of company profile translation between Chinese and English. Some suggestions will be proposed to improve the translation quality. It is hope that the study can throw some useful insight into E-C translation of company profile to promote the global economic prosperity.

1. Introduction

Company profile is the medium of companies exchange and communication. In order to obtain a high quality TT (Target Text), translator should take culture and language difference into consideration. Combing the translation theory, this paper will indicate the difficulties and corresponding solution in the process of company profile translation from the perspective of textual, grammatical and words equivalence. Therefore, the following part will begin with analyzing the ST (Source Text) and target readers then mainly focuses on applying the translation theories and strategies to deal with the translation problems encountered during the producing of TT and some examples will be listed out to illustrate different features between English and Chinese.

2. Analyses of ST and target readers

Snell-Hornby (1988,69) pointed out that "textual analysis, which is an essential preliminary to translation, should proceed from the top down, from macro to micro level, from text to sign." The ST, Sainsbury's, abstracts from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia. The text Sainsbury's falls into two sections: the first part is the core of ST, which is mainly about the history of Sainsbury's from Victorian era to nowadays; the second section focuses on introducing the products of Sainsbury's in different ranges.

Company profile has its own features with particular purposes and functions to enhance the reputation of company. At present, there is no Sainsbury's in China, through the TT, Chinese retailers can learn about the third largest supermarket in UK. As the ST is relate to the commerce, the potential target readers presumably are those who are engaged or at least interested in business, such as retailers, customers, managements, business analysts, and even students and teachers who are learning or teaching Business Management and could take the Sainsbury's as a case to study. Therefore, Skopos namely the aim or purpose of a translation (Munday, 2008, 79) is to convey the information of the ST as much as possible into the TT.

3. Translation theories, strategies, problems and solutions

Different translation theories and strategies will be followed to obtain a satisfactory TT, and top down approach will be employed to discuss translation issues, from three aspects namely, textual equivalence, grammatical equivalence and equivalence at word level, for translation goes through not only top down processing but also bottom up processing,

and the two processes go hand in hand. What's more, the top down processing gives guidance and determines the bottom up processing at the macro level.

3.1 Textual equivalence: Cohesion

A text is not a random collection of individual sentences, but a semantic unit of sentences relate to each other. Therefore, in translation of ST, one major problem is how to translate the ST as a whole so as to make the TT cohesive in structure and coherent in meaning. Baker (2008:180) defines the function of cohesion as follows: "cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which provide links between various parts of a text. These relations or ties organize and, to some extent create a text, for instances by requiring the reader to interpret words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs." Halliday and Hasan (1976, 30) point out that there are five main cohesive devices in English, reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

Substitution and ellipsis are very common in ST. Baker (1992, 187) claims that "the boundary lines between the three types of cohesive device (reference, substitution, and ellipsis) are not clear out." and indicate that "lexical repetition is a much safe option in case where ambiguity of reference may arise in contexts which do not tolerate ambiguity in general and ambiguity of reference in particular (1992, 190)." Therefore, when translator faced with ellipsis in the ST, it is important to find out the presupposed item in the preceding sentence, and then supply the omitted words in TT. For example:

ST (1): Part of this investment saw the construction of four fully automated depots, which at £100 million each cost four times more than standard depots.

TT (1): 四个完全自动化仓库, 作为投资项目的一部分, 耗资一亿英镑, 每个价格是标准仓库 (价格) 的四倍。

ST (2): It expanded more cautiously than Tesco, shunning acquisitions, and it never offered trading stamps.

TT (2): 桑斯博里的扩张比乐购的 (扩张) 更小心谨慎些, 他们回避收购, 且从不使用邮票兑换券。

In the above examples, "cost and expanded" are left out in ST. However, the elliptical parts in the ST are all added in the TT by repetition, and making

the TT cohesive and natural to the Chinese readers.

"Conjunction involves the use of formal markers to relate sentences, clauses and paragraphs to each other. It signals the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what has been said before (Baker, 1992, 190)." Different conjunctions were adopted to convey the information of semantic and logical connections between sentences. For example:

ST: Stores started to look similar, so people could recognize them throughout London, a high cast iron 'J. SAINSBURY' sign featured on every store so their stores could be seen on coaches and omnibuses, and round-the-back deliveries started to add extra convenience and not upset rivals due to Sainsbury's popularity.

TT: 商店有着相似的装修风格, 所以在伦敦人们能够识别它们。每家店都有标志性的符号, 高大的由铸铁的“桑斯博里”几个大字引人注目, 而在大巴上和公交车上都能看到它。此外, 为了使得生活更便捷, 超市提供送货服务, 因此大众化的桑斯博里, 没有对手能够与其抗衡。

Although conjunction in both English and Chinese language shares some similarities in function and location, there still exist some differences in using conjunction between these two languages. These differences mainly lie in the explicit and implicit connections between clauses or sentences, which owe to the different language structures. In the above example, the ST only has one sentence with several subordinate clauses. However, TT contains three shorter sentences, and the meaning of these conjunctions "so", "and", and "due to" in ST are similar with Chinese, so they can be translated into "所以", "此外", and "因此" respectively. The only change in TT is that adding an implicit causal conjunction "为了" (in order to) in the TT make the translation more acceptable and the readers are easier to recognize the logic relationships.

It is necessary to take into account the last type of cohesive relation, namely lexical cohesion. Baker (1992, 202) states that "lexical cohesion refers to the role played by the selection of vocabulary in the organizing relations within a text." A kind of lexical cohesion is collocation, and Halliday and Hasan (1976, 285) points out that collocation is "the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur", and there is "cohesion between any pair of lexical items that stand to each other in some recognizable lexicosemantic relation." Collocation plays a very important part in the creation of TT. For example, the ST vividly describes the Sainsbury's heyday, and there is a set of collocation chain, "shot up in value", "the advantage", "joint venture", "tripled in size", "purchased", "profits grown" to show Sainsbury's status and dramatic growth so that no opponent could challenge it in that time.

Snell-Hornby (1988, 69) suggest that "in analyzing a text a translator is not concerned with isolating phenomena or items to study them in deep, but with tracing a web of relationships, the importance of individual items being determined by their relevance and function in the text" to translate this collocation chain. Therefore, the paragraphs and sentences which contain these collocation words must be paid more attention to obtain an equivalence TT, then translated them into "价值突飞猛涨", "占优势", "合资企业", "规模扩大三倍", "收购", "利润增加" respectively. It is noticed that all of these translated words attempt to convey an active emotion to make the function of collocation chain in TT accordance with the ST.

3.2 Grammatical equivalence

Apart from the textual equivalence problems, there are some problems due to the different grammar between English and Chinese. As Baker (1992, 103) said "Chinese verbs having no voice refer to the fact that the form of the verb in Chinese does not change to indicate its relationship with the subject of the clause." While in English, there is one kind of passive sentence patterns, "be +passive+ participle", and such kinds of sentences are very common in ST. For example:

ST: Following the outbreak of World War II, many of the men that worked for Sainsbury's were called to do National Service and were replaced by women. Given Sainsbury's reputation for quality foods at fair prices, the Second World War were difficult times for Sainsbury's, as with most of its stores trading in the London area, were bombed or damaged. Turnover fell to half the pre-war level. Food was rationed, and one particular store in East Grinstead was so badly damaged on Friday 9 July 1943, that it had to move to the local Church as a temporary replacement, whilst a new one was built. This store was not completed until 1951.

TT: 随着第二次世界大战的爆发, 许多在桑斯博里工作的男员工被应征服役去了, 取而代之的是女员工。此外, 桑斯博里以物美价廉闻名,

因此第二次世界大战对它来说是个困难时期, 大多数位于伦敦地区的店铺被轰炸或是损坏了, 营业额滑落到战前一半的水平。当时正处于食物定量供应时期, 1943 年 7 月 9 日, 星期五位于东格林斯特德地区的一个店铺惨遭损坏, 所以它不得不迁往当地教堂, 以此作为临时的场地, 同时桑斯博里重新建立一家店铺, 然而到 1951 年这家店都未能竣工。

The basic passive sentence structure in Chinese is "被+ verb". The two words "被" and "遭" can be used to construct passive structures in the TT, most of which have the expression of something unsatisfactory or unexpected. In this case, the ST want to convey that the period of the Second World War were difficult time for Sainsbury's and everything is unfortunate such as lack of workers and stores were bombed. So in the TT, "被" and "遭" were used to introduce "轰炸" (bomb) and "损坏" (damage). Active voice is more frequently used in Chinese than in English. In this example, the passive structure "a new one was built" was translated into "桑斯博里重新建立一家店铺" and the implied subject "桑斯博里" was added to the TT.

3.3 Equivalence at word level

English has a few inflectional forms for each lexical item to express the same meaning, while Chinese lexical items has no inflection so the repetition of the same word is often employed to express the same lexical relation. For instance:

ST: Sainsbury's policy was to invest in uniform, well-designed stores with a strong emphasis on quality;

TT: 桑斯博里投资于营造统一的经营理念, 装修精美的店铺, 提供质量优异的产品。

ST: During the 1980s the Company invested in new technology: the proportion of sales passing through EPOS scanning checkouts rose from 1% to 90%.

TT: 二十世纪八十年代, 公司在新技术上进行投资, 即以电子销售点的方式来检测销售比例, 销售比例从 1%上升到 90%。

ST: In 2007 Sainsbury's announced a further £12 million investment in its depots to keep pace with sales growth and the removal of the failed automated systems from its depots.

TT: 2007 年桑斯博里宣布, 未来将投资一千两百万英镑用于仓库建设, 以确保销售平稳增长, 并且拆除仓库中失效的自动化系统。

In the above three examples, the ST word "invest, invested and investment" was translated into the same Chinese word "投资" because they express the same lexical relation in Chinese language.

In addition, a common or successful name in one nation does not guarantee that it is common or successful in china. As a consequence, there are some names cannot found their Chinese name on the Internet or dictionary. The method of transliteration can deal with this problem, that is to say such names are translated according to their pronunciation and plus a generic word, such as Texas Homecare (德克萨斯家具店) and Debenhams (德本汉姆百货公司). The important thing is that the transliteration method used on the names can be regarded as the foreignizing procedure, and it would lead to the curiosity of reader to venture, and then starts the process of culture spreading.

4. Conclusions

It is inevitable that there are many differences between English and Chinese which poses a great challenge for translator. The knowledge of translation theories and strategies is essential to the acceptance of translated company profiles. Translator is supposed to put into consideration the habit of the target language to apply different translation strategies. Moreover, in order to achieve the equivalent translated company profile text, the translator should be aware of the similarities and differences of two languages and use proper cohesive devices to make the text structure connected and information related.

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