Translation Commentary Report of *Succeeding as an English Teacher*

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**Abstract**

This article is a translation practice report. The book is *Succeeding as an English Teacher*. This book was jointly written by many people engaged in English teaching. The purpose of this book is to guide how to become a successful English teacher. The project selected the first three chapters of the book as research materials for the translation report. The content of this translation report is mainly divided into five parts. The first part is an introduction to the translation project. The second part is about the difficulties and challenges encountered in the translation process. The third part is about methods and strategies for dealing with difficulties and challenges encountered in translation. The fourth part is based on translation practice to propose suggestions for future generations to address relevant issues. The fifth part summarizes the experience and inspiration in the translation process. This article validates relevant solutions to problems encountered in translation practice.

**Keywords**

Translation practice report, Translation issues and challenges, Translation strategy

1. Introduction

In my opinion, only when we are full of love for something, can we persist in it for a long time. It was precisely because I was interested in this aspect that I finally chose such a book to translate and write the commentary report. The title of the book is: *succeeding as an English teacher*. In my opinion, the translation of books can not be completed overnight. It is also a long and arduous process to do translation research. So in the choice of books, we must choose what we are interested in. In this way, we can successfully promote the development of translation studies.

This book is written by many people who have been engaged in English teaching. They are Abigail Mann, Lyndsay Bawden, Fe Brewer, Davina Canham, Mary Hind Portley, Ruth Holder, Kaley Macis Riley, Laura May Rowlands, Andy Sammons, Zara Shah, Laura Tsabet and Holly Wimbush. These authors are all from the same country—Britain. This book is a guide to practice. Its purpose is to guide how to become a successful English teacher. It includes all the elements of being a successful English teacher. Each part of the book is combined with actual cases, which makes it easier for readers to understand the article. It was published in the UK in 2021. It is very helpful for those who want to engage in English teaching.

Now let's take a brief look at the contents of each chapter. At the beginning of teachers' career, we are all in the novice stage of teachers. It tells readers what to do. The second chapter is the development of subject knowledge. The third chapter is about planning. As teachers, we should understand the key and difficult points of a class and explain them in detail. In addition, from Chapter 4 to Chapter 10, it makes a detailed statement on the writing, reading and vocabulary involved in English teaching.
I have done the following parts in this translation: the cover of the book, the author's copyright, the table of contents, the preface, the introduction, the introduction, the references, the author's autobiography and the contents of the first three chapters of the book.

2. Challenges

According to Nida (1964), no two languages are the same, whether in terms of the meaning of corresponding symbols or the arrangement of symbols in phrases and sentences, there cannot be an absolute correspondence between languages. This is a long and difficult process to improve translation.

Therefore, translation needs the combination of theory and practice. For this problem, I believe that the curriculum responsibility of colleges and universities at home and abroad has long thought of this problem. So we can see that both Chinese universities and other universities in the world pay attention to cultivating students' translation theoretical knowledge and comprehensive practical ability when they train students majoring in translation. I think this is why I translated this educational book and wrote this translation report.

2.1 If the translation is out of context, there will be errors in translation

According to Hu (2010), Translation is the process of reconstructing situational context in the target language. Due to the absence of the same context, different translation strategies should be developed. As we all know, the context of Chinese and English is very different. Translation out of context is very likely to produce errors.

For example, I came across a sentence in the process of Translation: “it is a collaborative Tour de force”, “collaborative” means cooperative. “Tour” means travel. “De force” means reaction force. Then, when we connect the meaning of this sentence word by word, we may translate it as: This is a cooperative journey of reaction. Well, obviously, the translation of this sentence is very inappropriate. And the meaning of the sentence is difficult for readers to understand.

From here we can see that we are clear about every word of this sentence. The basic structure of this sentence is also very clear. However, the “one-to-one correspondence” method commonly used in translation is obviously not feasible here. So what is the reason? The fundamental reason is that we are out of context. Here, we can use a Chinese idiom to describe it: “meaning comes from words”. By reading the context, we can find this sentence in the preface of the book. What this part explains is the origin of this work and an introduction to all aspects of this work as a whole.

Therefore, there is no travel problem here. “Tour” can not be simply understood as the “journey” we think. We can regard it as a “process”—a process of cooperation. Of course, we can also compare it to a “journey of cooperation”. In addition, “de force” can be understood as “mutual assistance”. So throughout the context, we can extend the meaning of the sentence. We can understand the sentence as follows: “This is the result of our joint efforts”.

2.2 The expression of English and Chinese proverbs is one of the challenges when we do translation

According to Wang et al. (2023), to accelerate the dissemination of Chinese characteristic discourse, the English translation of proverbs has received widespread attention. From the perspective of conceptual function, there are significant differences in participant and environmental usage among translations with different translation quality.

The difficulties are mainly reflected in two aspects: first, due to the lack of knowledge, they do not understand the meaning of idioms. So it is easy to make mistakes in translation. The second point is that when I read the original text, I clearly understood the meaning of this idiom. However, I can not find the corresponding sentence in the target. In other words, knowledge extraction is difficult. If English proverbs or some sentences want to correspond perfectly, it is a very heavy workload and a very difficult process.

For example, I came across a sentence in the process of Translation: “by finding experienced voices, perhaps collating a number of mini speakers for yourself across the school, you will be more likely to flood”. In this sentence, the general meaning it wants to express is that we should learn more from the experienced people around us, and then we will be successful. This sentence can be replaced by “if three people walk, there must be my teacher”. It is a famous Chinese verb and it is more appropriate to use this sentence in the translation.

Therefore, expressions such as proverbs and idioms are another obstacle in our translation process. Because when translating them, we are restricted by the cultural knowledge of both sides.

2.3 One of the challenges in the process of translation is the cultural differences among different countries

The majority of a language's vocabulary contains cultural allusions and is consequently unique to that language
Therefore, cultural differences will greatly affect the quality of translation. First, different cultures make people from different ways of thinking. For the Chinese people, we have been influenced by Confucius' thought since ancient times. He asked us to be polite, modest, cautious and so on. So Chinese people and Chinese language have more obscure meanings. In many cases, when people express their ideas, they will not say it directly, but express it in an obscure way. But in English speaking countries, most people have been influenced by the Renaissance and the enlightenment, so people are more open-minded. Moreover, they are very direct in their words and will not beat around the bush. On the other hand, culture also restricts us to our mother tongue thinking and our translation. For example, in China, we are used to putting time in front. For example, today, we went to the park. English thinking likes to put time behind. For example, we went to the park today.

Therefore, cultural differences have a great impact on our translation. Culture makes us from our mother tongue thinking and makes it more difficult for us to think like the target language. Different countries have different cultures and different ways of thinking, which is undoubtedly a major difficulty in our translation process.

3. Strategies/Methods

Three fundamental principles govern translation: the psychological principle, the message-transmission principle, and the aesthetic principle. According to the aesthetics principle, the translator must convey the original works' beauty in sense, sound, and form in their translations (Liu Kezhang, 1994). We need to adhere to translation principles and choose different translation strategies based on different translation barriers. As is well known, there are many translation methods and strategies, such as literal translation, retranslation, domestication, foreignization, semantic translation, etc. When dealing with specific sentences, these translation methods are not applicable to all situations. The method we choose depends on the situation. Let's take a look at some of the translation methods I used in this translation.

3.1 Literal translation

Word-by-word translation is an easy method of translation that works well with expressions like Possess modular structure that have the same grammatical structure and matches (Shen, 2022). This translation method retains both the content and the form of the original text. Literal translation can retain the characteristics of the original text without damaging the structure of the original text, which is more conducive to the introduction of foreign culture and promote the spread of foreign excellent culture. It helps to promote readers' knowledge expansion. It is applicable to the translation of various styles.

For example, in translation, I came across a sentence: “or, perhaps you have read it but not taught it”. This sentence is very similar to our Chinese language structure. So we can directly translate this sentence by literal translation. The reader is clear and the translation also conforms to the meaning of the original text.

Therefore, through my own experience and judgment, when translating, I can translate literally, because this can ensure the original appearance of the article. If not, we can choose another method. Literal translation is the best way to reach the word “faith”.

3.2 Free translation

Free translation, also known as liberal translation, differs from literal translation in that it only maintains the original text's content rather than its original form (Chen, 2010). It does not translate word for word. When translating some complex sentences, phrases or larger meaning groups. Especially when the cultural backgrounds of the source language and the target language are different, there are great cultural differences. Then we can consider whether to use free translation to solve the problem.

In this translation, I have used free translation. For example, this is a joyful and cellular exploration of a role which all the authors clearly relish, and their energy, enthusiasm and commitment are important through as they share their insights If this sentence is translated directly, it will be difficult to understand. So I use the free translation method to extract the general meaning of the sentence, and then express it. This is easier for readers to understand.

3.3 Domestication and Foreignization

Domestication and foreignization are also translation strategies that we often use in translation. The term “domestication” refers to a type of translation where a clear, fluid style is used to lessen the strangeness of the foreign text for readers of the target language (Yang, 2010). Alienation is a translation technique that keeps some of the original text’s
foreign language characteristics while purposefully breaking the rules of the target language (Wu, 2023). For example, I have used the translation strategies of domestication and foreignization in the following two sentences. The first sentence is like this: “We need to be explicit about the knowledge around this. If this means that we need to do some reading around the history of the dystopian genre or the ‘seven basic plots’, this will enrich our teaching”. The word “dystopian” in the sentence is translated by foreignization. It retains its original features. Because the Chinese already know this word well, there is no need to explain it.

And the second sentence is like this: “There will come times in the year when staff who hadn’t checked the shared calendar will double book you”. In this sentence, if we directly adopt the alienation method, it can be translated as: “Several times a year, employees who do not check the shared calendar will double their bookings for you”. Obviously, this will make the reader misunderstand the meaning of the sentence. So I adopted the method of domestication. “There will always be a time in the year when things accumulate because we don't check the calendar in time”. Such a translation can make it link up with the context perfectly, and finally produce a good translation effect.

Domestication and foreignization are unity of opposites and complement each other. In our translation practice, the translator should properly use the two strategies according to the specific characteristics of the text, the purpose of the text, the characteristics of the source language and the target language, and the national culture, so as to achieve a specific and dynamic unity.

4. Suggestions

In the process of this translation, cultural background, context and language have brought great difficulties and challenges to translation. But I have found the corresponding translation strategies to deal with them reasonably and appropriately. First, we should pay attention to combine theory with practice. Second, a cross-linguistic, sociocultural practice is translation (Wang, 2014). Only when we keep learning and accumulating all kinds of knowledge can we deal with all kinds of translation situations calmly. And what we translate is a language. Language is closely related to the culture of each country. Therefore, it is very important to understand the cultural background and customs of different regions. The translator's language must be careful and accurate, since the translator's mistakes may cause economic losses. What's more, a wrong translation of a sentence may lead to war. So the translator is a very serious profession. We should constantly improve and improve to meet the needs of the society.

5. Conclusions

In this article, I mainly analyze and explain the difficult challenges encountered in the process of translation, such as context, proverbs, and cultural differences. At the same time, I also elaborate on coping strategies such as literal translation, free translation, domestication, and foreignization. The translations will vary depending on the translator's comprehension of the original text at the time of translation, the translation principles and standards they choose, and the translation tactics they employ (Huo et al., 2020). We need to combine theory and practice in translation research to solve more translation research problems and benefit more people.

References


