A Report of Translation on “Language Teacher Identity in (Multi)Lingual Educational Contexts”

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Abstract

With the increasing studies on teacher identity, research on Language Teacher Identity (LTI) has become a hot topic discussed among domestic and international language education researchers. In recent years, research on LTI does not focus on some particular driving factor, such as nationality, career, gender, social class, and so on, but strives to take full consideration of the comprehensive effects of various factors and the significant implications of the research, such as the close relationship between LTI and social harmony. Therefore, research on LTI plays a significant role in the training of language teachers, language education reform, and long-term social development. This report is inspired by a research project on language teacher education. The source text is selected from TESOL Quarterly, a top academic journal on TESOL. The September Issue of 2016 commits to exploring the LTI research. As the preface of the issue, the source text seeks to feature articles in the issue into three themes and demonstrates the research background, current situation, and further development of three themes. This translation report aims to enhance understanding of translation theories, especially Text Typology, and improve the translator’s translation competence by adopting Text Typology to resolve problems in the translation.

Keywords

Language Teaching, LTI, Text Typology

1. Translation Process

In order to accomplish the translation report smoothly and successfully, it is of great necessity to make full preparations. Firstly, to better understand the source text, professional knowledge needs to be acquainted in advance. Reference books on language teaching and Language Teacher Identity should be collected. Secondly, Abundant theories have been sought and some works relevant to Text Typology and translation strategies of informative text are necessary to be read thoroughly. Thirdly, to improve translation productivity and guarantee the target text quality, digital databases and tools are prepared for reference, such as The English-Chinese Dictionary, New World Dictionary of the American Language. The glossary will certainly effectively influence the quality and efficiency of the translation work. Revising work is the necessary and crucial step for completing the translation and guaranteeing the translation to be clear, logical, accurate, professional, and coherent. Two approaches, self-revision, and peer revision, contribute to the further and continuous process.

Self-proofreading aims to distinguish the interpreter’s check activities and check activities with other personnel to participate in or complete (Mossop, 2001), in which translators modify and improve the target text by himself or herself. Firstly, checking whether the target text is smooth and fluent, and whether the target text is understood by target readers.
Example 1.1:

ST: As such, each of us came to our individual understandings of this embeddedness in our personal and professional lives by different paths, as illustrated by the following narratives from each co-editor.

First version: Suo yi, wo men mei ge ren zi ji dou tong guo bu tong de fang fa, li jie le ge ren he zhuan ye sheng huo xiang hu qian ru, zheng ru yi xia he bian zhe de xu shu suo shi.

Second version: Wo men bu tong de fang shi, bu tong de ge ren sheng huo he zhi ye sheng ya dao zhi wo men xing cheng le dui yu jiao shi shen fen bu tong de ren shi, yi xia shi ci kan zhong ge xue zhe de chen shu.

The first version makes the word for word in the form without considering the context. For example, the source word “embeddedness” is translated into the superficial meaning “qian ru xing”. After self-revision, it is found that the first version cannot connect with the above text smoothly. Therefore, after reading the whole paragraph several times, it is clear that the “embeddedness” refers to the above research element “yu yan jiao shi shen fen” . Then it is supposed to adopt the free translation. In addition, by means of consulting the relevant academic articles, it is found that the word “co-editor” has specific reference—“xue zhe” in this academic article. Through these revisions, the target language can be more accurate and fluent.

2. Analysis of Strategies Applied in the Translation Process

2.1 Lexis

Literal translation strives to reproduce both the ideological content and the style of entire literary work and retain as much as possible the figures of speech and the main sentence structures or patterns. Free translation means mainly conveying the meaning and the spirit of the source text without retaining its sentence patterns or figures of speech.

Example 2.1.1:

ST: If the commitment to identity is not just a metaphysical proposition but a serious recognition that our work as teachers shapes and is shaped by the very mode of our being, then thinking about the formation of our identities is crucial for all of us in education (Clarke, 2009).

First version: Ru guo zhi li yu yan jiao shi shen fen ren zhi de yan jiu bu zai jin jin shi yuan ren zhi, er shi zai wo men zuo wei lao shi de gong zuo zhong he you wo wo men cun zai fang shi shu xing cheng de yan su ren zhi, ran hou si kao wo men men fen de gou cheng, zhe dui suo you jiao ya jie de ren du zhi guan zhong yao (Clarke, 2009).

Second version: Ru guo dui yu yan jiao shi shen fen de ren zhi bu shi ren men tian sheng suo jiu you de li nian, er shi yi ge yan su de ren zhi guo cheng. wo men de jiao shi gong zuo su zao le wo men de shen fen ren zhi, tong shi wo men de shen fen ren zhi you fan guo lai ying xiang le wo men de jiao shi gong zuo, suo yi tan suo wo men men fen de xing cheng dui mei yi wei jiao ya ren zhi dou zhi guan zhong yao (Clarke, 2009).

Although the sentence pattern is very clear—conditional sentence guided by “If”, the word “metaphysical”, and the phrase “the very mode of our being” are unfamiliar. In the first version, literation has been adopted to translate these words, respectively “yuan ren zhi” and “cun zai fang shi”, however, the target readers cannot understand the target text. As a consequence, it is reasonable to adopt free translation to translate the sentence aiming to replicate the source information to the greatest extend. In the second version, the translations “tian sheng suo jiu you de” and “jiao shi gong zuo” allow the target sentence to be fluent and consistent. In addition, the conjunction “then” is translated into “suo yi” rather than the literal meaning “ran hou”, which makes the target text more readable and conform to Chinese expressions.

2.2 Syntax

When encountering the long and complex sentence, translator divides the whole meaning group into several small meaning groups in the light of Chinese grammar and idiomatic usage. Conversion means changing the mode of expression of the source text in the target text so as to make the translation readable and logical, such as the transformation of nouns.

Example 2.2.1:

ST: Our decision to propose a special issue of TESOL Quarterly on language teacher identity (LTI) grew out of our growing recognition of the profound embeddedness of LTI within the research, teaching, and policy practices of (multi)lingual professionals and the immense interest generated by LTI work within the disciplines that engage with language education.

TT: 《dui wai ying yu jiao xue ji kan》jiu yu yan jiao shi shen fen de bian zhuang zhi kan ci, yi fang min shi yin wei wo men yu lai yue shen ke de ren zhi dao (duo yu) yu yan xue ling yu zhong yu yan jiao shi shen fen yan jiu, jiao xue he zheng ce zhi xing de yi yi ; ling yi fang min shi yin wei yu yan jiao ya xiang quan de xue ke zhong yu yan jiao shi shen fen ren zhi yan jiu yin qi le wo men de ju da xing qu.
The subject “decision”, objects “recognition” and “interest” are modified by preposition phrases or long clauses, consequently, it is necessary to divide the long sentence group into three sentence groups, and in the target text, every group is connected with conjunctions “yi fang mian……ling yi fang mian……” in order to cohere to the Chinese expression and be elegant in the construction. At the same time, based on the translation strategy—making target text readable, accurate, and smooth, it is supposed to adopt the translation skill conversion. In the translation, converting the noun form of “recognition” into verb form aims to bring the target readers the greatest ease when reading.

2.3 Discourse

Because the source text is composed of several themes, the content of every part presents further explanations for the former part. To guarantee discourse coherence, it is supposed to adopt amplification to fulfill the information omitted in the source text and omission to achieve discourse concisely. Amplification aims to add necessary words so as to make the target text explicit in meaning, logical in grammar, and beautiful in rhetoric. Omission means omitting the words or phrases which prove to be redundant and useless in the target language if they are kept.

Example 2.3.1:

ST: We use (multi) in (multi)lingual to underscore our desire to move beyond a monolingual lens in TESOL and to highlight potential extensions to the notion of multilingualism, such as (pluri), (trans), (ethno), and (racio). This allows us to complicate the ever-changing, situated, and fluid nature of LTI beyond the essentialist categories often associated with the profession. These extensions, in particular, acknowledge language teachers (LTSs) as denizens and creators of conversational borderlands (Anzaldua, 1987). As such, each of us came to our individual understandings of this embeddedness in our personal and professional lives by different paths, as illustrated by the following narratives from each co-

First version: Wo men shi yong duo yu lai qiang diao chao yue TESOL zhong dan yu jiao du de ke wang, bing qiang diao duo yu yan gai nian qian zai de kuo zhan, li ru (duo), (fan shi), (min zu) he (yuan yin), zhe shi wo men neng chao yue tong chang yu zhuang ye you guan de ben zhi zhu yi lei bie, jiang yu yan jiao shi shen fen de qian bian wan hua, qing jing hua le liu dong xing zhi fu za hua. Te bie shi, zhe xie kuo zhan jiang yu yan jiao shi wei hui hua bian jie de chang zhu zhe he chuang zao zhe (Anzaldua, 1987). Suo yi, wo men mei ge ren ji di tu tong guo bu tong de fang fa, li jie le ge ren he zhuang ye sheng huo xiang hu qian ru, zheng ru yi xia he bian zhe de xu shu suo shi.

Second version: Wo men shi yong duo yu yan zong de duo (multi) qu qiang diao wo men yi jing chao yue le TESOL jiao xue zhong de dan yu yan jiu fan wei yi ji qiang diao duo yu zhu yi qi an zai de wai han li nian, bi ru(duo yu) yu yan, (kua xue ke) yu yan, (zhong zu) yu yan he (min zu) yu yan. Tong guo zhe xie xian yu jiu, wo men chao yue le zhi qian jin xian yu ben hang ye you guan de ji ben nei han, er jin yi bu qu tan suoyu yu yan jiao shi shen fen ben zhi de fu za nei han: duo bian xing, qing jing xing he liu dong xing. Zhe xie fang mian de jin yi bu tan suoyu yu yan jiao shi zhu tu tan zhe hua shou wei zhe he chuang zao zhe (Anzaldua, 1987). Wo men bu tong de fang shi, bu tong de ge ren sheng huo he zhi ye sheng ya dao zhi wo men xing cheng de lei yu yan jiao shi shen fen bu tong de ren shi, yi xia shi ci kan zong he xue zhe de chen shu.

In this paragraph, “This”, “These” and “As such” present the compact structure of English sentence, but the structure of Chinese sentence is loose. In the first version, these words are translated literally into “zhe”, “zhe xie”, and “suoyi”, which fails to clearly transfer source information. On the basis of translation strategy—reproducing source information completely, it is of great necessity to adopt amplification. In the second version, by taking the context into consideration, adding necessary words “tong guo zhe xie yan jiu”, “zhe xie fang mian de jin yi bu tan suoyu” can guarantee the discourse coherence and make target readers comprehend the source text smoothly and explicitly. Meanwhile, the conjunction “As such” is omitted in the second version to avoid redundancy in the target language, because discourse logicality can be easily understood by target readers.

3. Conclusion

The report aims to analyze the linguistic features of source text and translation strategies and methods adopted to solve problems in the translation process. Before translation, good preparations contribute to improving the quality of the translation, such as prepared translation tools. Literally translating and retranslating have to be conducted to achieve language accuracy, language fluency, and discourse coherence. Through conducting revisions and comparing several different translation versions, the translator can learn to adopt translation strategies and methods more flexibly, such as literation, conversion, amplification, and so on. Furthermore, the translator has harvested professional knowledge about the research on LIT, TESOL teachers, and language education. As a translator, it is necessary to learn how to take advantage of translation tools, which will improve work efficiency. Furthermore, in the future, it is significant to strengthen the ability
of bilingual transformation. When learning English, the translator should not ignore the native language study. Only when being adept at bilingual transformation can the translator handle the translation proficiently. In addition, it is of significance to enhance the study of translation theories. With the guidance of translation theories, the translation can be conducted smoothly.

References


