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STUDY ON TRANSLATION OF METAPHOR IN *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELEVANCE THEORY

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Abstract
The relevance translation theory put forward by Gutt raises two translation strategies: direct translation and indirect translation. The concept of communicative clues put forward by Gutt provides guidance for translation. This paper intends to analyze the application of direct translation in the translation of metaphors, finding that Liang Shiqiu and Zhu Shenghao translate differently when dealing with metaphors and the preservation of communicative clues arising in semantic representation and syntactic properties. Liang Shiqiu prefers preserving the cultural image and sentence structure in the original text while Zhu Shenghao prefers substituting the original cultural image and adopting amplification. As two translators convey communicative clues differently, the relevance degree of the two versions also varies.

Keywords: Relevance Translation Theory; Communicative Clues; Metaphor Translation; *Much Ado About Nothing*

1.   Introduction

The traditional view of metaphor arises from the Aristotle period. Aristotle defines metaphor as "a movement [*epiphora*] of an alien [*allotrios*] name either from genus to species or from species to genus or from species to species or by analogy" (276). Classical scholars take metaphor as a figure of speech, a way to decorate plain language. Lakoff (4) rather sees metaphor not only as a language phenomenon but as a kind of cognitive phenomenon, introducing metaphor study to a broader research area. Grice studies metaphor from the perspective of pragmatics, believing the use of

metaphor violates the quality principle in cooperative principle, that is, do not say what you believe to be false. Later, Sperber and Wilson use relevance theory to analyze metaphor, claiming metaphor doesn't violate the principle of communication. They take metaphor as a loose talk (153). Therefore, the inference model of general utterance in relevance theory can apply to the inference of metaphor.

Since relevance theory has been put forward by Sperber and Wilson, a great number of scholars have applied translation theory in translation. Among them, one of the most influential scholars is

Ernst-august Gutt as he raises relevance translation theory based on relevance theory. Relevance translation theory takes translation as a kind of communication and explains it as a dual ostensive-inferential process. Readers made inferences about the intention of the original writer, requiring translators to understand the right implicature of the original writer. Given that metaphors are often present in literary text and Shakespeare's drama, as a language storehouse, contains numerous metaphors, this paper chooses *Much Ado About Nothing* as the analysis text. And translation versions of Liang Shiqiu and Zhu Shenghao will be compared to evaluate whether two translators have guided readers to infer the communicator's intention and achieve optimal relevance.

2. Relevance Translation Theory and Metaphor

The publication of *Translation and Relevance---Cognitive and Context* written by Ernst-august Gutt in 1991 represents the birth of relevance translation theory. Gutt put forward that the nature of translation is human communication behavior and raises two translation strategies: direct translation and indirect translation, both of which belong to interlanguage interpretive use. Direct translation is similar to direct speech quotation which retains the content of speech, while indirect translation is similar to indirect speech quotation, which retains the meaning of utterance (132). Direct speech quotation depends on the similarity between linguistic features. The meaning of retaining stylistic features lies in stylistic features that can provide clues to guide the audience to make inferences about the communicator's intention. Such clues are called communicative clues. Direct translation can be defined as a translation that retains all communicative clues. Communicative clues can be classified into five types: communicative clues arising from semantic representations, communicative clues arising from syntactic properties, communicative clues arising from phonetic properties, communicative clues arising from semantic constraints, and communicative clues arising from formulaic expressions. According to the feature of metaphor, this paper will analyze communicative clues arising from semantic representation and syntactic properties.

From the perspective of relevance theory, the meaning of the metaphor is indefinite and open. For instance, John eats like a pig. The logical proposition of this sentence may be the pig eats too much, or the pig eats too fast. But in what ways John eats like pigs require context to understand because the meaning of the sentence is manifold and has varied ways to understand. The traditional view of metaphors believes metaphor compares the similarities between the "tenor" and "vehicle". Sperber and Wilson believe the meaning of the metaphor is not so definite. There are many implicatures. When a communicator stresses one specific meaning, he may imply many other meanings. Therefore, Sperber and Wilson believe the picture drawn by a metaphor can not be generalized by a single sentence (236). So, instead of translating the intention of metaphors and depriving readers of the possibility of experiencing rich implicatures of metaphors, such an assumption requires the translator to retain original communicative clues and help readers to feel and infer the intention of the communicator, achieving contextual effects from the openness of meaning.

3. Translation of metaphors in *Much Ado About Nothing* from the perspective of relevance translation theory

3.1 Communicative Clues Arising from Semantic Representation

Given that communicative clues can guide readers to infer communicative clues, translators need to retain them during the translation process. But how to identify communicative clues? Gutt proposes that one kind of communicative clue present in semantic representation is the hypothesis source of the communicator's intention. Sperber and Wilson define semantic representation as an abstract mental structure. If a translator uses a clearer and closer thought semantic framework, he will understand and solve translation problems easier. Relevance theory believes such a framework is related to the nature of the concept which contains three kinds of information: logical entry, encyclopedic entry, and lexical entry. In the following explanation, this paper analyzes how translation retains communicative clues and retains

the style of the original text from the perspective of logical entry, encyclopedic entry, and lexical entry.

3.1.1 Logical Entry

A part of semantic representation is determined by logical entry. Logical entry consists of deductive rules. According to Sperber and Wilson, the only deductive rules present in the logical entry are "elimination rules" (86). Gutt put forward that the content of assumption is determined by logical entry, so logical entry is essential information of concept.

Example 1: **LEONATO** You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them. (Shakespeare 1.1.57-60)

Zhu's translation:

> 里奥那托 请你不要误会舍侄女的意思。培尼狄克先生跟她是说笑惯了，他们一见了面，总是舌剑唇枪，各不相让。(321)

Liang's translation:

> 李 你不可误会我的侄女所说的话。班耐底克先生和她之间总是爱开玩笑：两人一见面就斗嘴。(15-17)

In this utterance, Beatrice is making fun of Benedick and Leonato steps out to make an excuse for his niece, Beatrice, by comparing the bickering between them to a "war" and "skirmish". Although the tenor doesn't appear in this utterance, it is easy to infer that the tenor is bickering according to the logical entry of "war".

> Input: X is war
>
> Output: X is the highest form of conflict

War is often caused by conflict and it is the highest form of conflict. There are attackers and defenders in the war. Argument or bickering is the same in this respect. Due to the logical entry of war, the audience can infer the meaning of "war" in "merry war" is "conflict". And conflict often brings to the argument. Combined with the context of the dialogue, the implicature of the utterance is inferred, that is, Beatrice and Benedick often joke with each other.

Two translators adopt different translation strategies. Liang's version applies indirect translation. According to relevance translation theory, indirect translation allows the translator to change the original text in many aspects as long as the intention of the communicator is retained. Liang's version omits communicative clues arising from the semantic representation directly, rendering "war" or "skirmish" into "开玩笑" "斗嘴", that is "joking" and "bickering" and directly presenting the intention of the original writer by omitting the vehicle. On the contrary, Zhu Shenghao's version is close to the original text. In his translation"舌剑唇枪" "交锋" and "杀得抱头鼠窜"" all retain the communicative clues of the logical entry of "war". His translation retains both the style and intention of the original text, achieving a satisfying effect.

3.1.2 Encyclopedic Entry

Encyclopedic entry involves the extension of the concept. Contrary to logical entry, encyclopedic entry is not an essential part of the concept. The encyclopedic entry of the concept relates to some specific cultural connotation, requiring readers to use encyclopedic knowledge to infer the deep cultural connotation in the utterance and understand the intention of the communicator.

Example 2:

BENEDICK Come, talk not of her, you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her. (Shakespeare 2.1.223-224)

Liang's translation:

> 班 算了。不要谈她；你会发现她是衣冠齐整的凶恶的哀蒂女神。我愿哪一位学者来降服她。（希腊神话，Ate 女神是制造纠纷摩擦之神，被上天的宙斯抓住头发掷到下届。"衣冠齐整"，言其被上天掷下时服装当然凌乱。学者懂拉丁文，降服魔怪之咒文是用拉丁文写的，故云。）(55+200)

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Zhu's translation:

> 培尼狄克 好了，别讲她了。她就是母夜叉的变相，但愿上帝差一个有法力的人来把她一道咒赶回地狱里去。(342)

Apparently, "Ate" is the key to understanding this utterance. Ate, the god in Greece myth, often creates chaos and makes trouble. By comparing Beatrice to "Ate", readers of the original text can easily infer that Beatrice is a troublemaker. When understanding the concept of "Ate", readers of the original text have to resort to an encyclopedic entry of the concept. But Chinese readers don't have such encyclopedic entries. Zhu Shenghao applies indirect translation by rendering "Ate" to "母夜叉", that is, a nickname of Sun Erniang in *Outlaws of the Marsh*. Sun Erniang is a shrew in the book. The intention of the original writer is retained through such translation given that the quality of the "Ate" and "母夜叉" is basically the same. Target text readers can infer that Beatrice is rude and troublesome from the encyclopedic entry of "母夜叉". Liang Shiqiu applies a direct translation strategy by rendering "Ate" into "哀蒂女神" which is the transliteration of "Ate" and adding an endnote to explain the background knowledge about "Ate". But readers of the target text have to invest more processing effort to infer the intention of the original writer. Although Zhu's version omits the original vehicle of metaphor, communicative clues are retained which can guide readers to infer communicative intention. To convey the style of the original writer, a direct translation strategy is preferred.

3.2 Communicative Clues Arising from Syntactic Properties

Levy believes communicative clues arising from syntactic properties are mainly present in sentence sequence, sentence structure, rhymed poems, musical texts, or dubbing (1969). Communicative clues often use varied sentence sequences or sentence structures to express communicative intention. For instance, putting adjectives at the end of a sentence to stress certain parts of the sentence. Communicators sometimes also use parallelism to make readers expect the following sentence structure to be the same as the above sentence structure, allowing readers to focus on places in which the constituent is different from the constituent in the same place in the above sentence structure. Given that the attention is paid only to different parts in parallelism, the processing effort is reduced. Gutt summarizes many factors that may affect processing efforts. One of the factors is the complexity degree of the structure of the stimulus. Another factor is the frequency of stimulus: the more frequent a sentence structure presents; the less processing effort is required to achieve optimal relevance.

Example 3: **HERO** How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,

> But she would spell him backward: if fair-faced,
>
> She would swear the gentleman should be her sister:
>
> If black, why, nature, drawing of an antic,
>
> Made a foul blot: If tall, a lance ill-headed:
>
> If low, an agate very vilely cut:
>
> If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds:
>
> If silent, why, a block moved with none.
>
> (Shakespeare 3.1.59-67)

Liang's translation:

> 希 我从未见过一个男人，无论多么聪明，多么高贵，多么年轻，多么少有的漂亮，而她不把他说成为一文不值：如果脸色白皙，她就发誓说这男人应该是她的姊姊；如果是黑，那么便是，大自然画一个小丑撒上了一团墨渍；如果高大，便是一根长枪插上了一个怪枪头；如果矮小，便是一块没切好的玛瑙石；如果爱说话，那么就是个随风转动的风信旗；如果沉默不语，那么就是推转不动的一块木头。(89)

Zhu's translation:

> 希罗 无论怎样聪明、高贵、年轻、漂亮的男子，她总要把他批评得体无完肤：要是他脸长得白净，她就发誓说这位先生应当做她的妹妹；要是他皮肤黑了点儿，她就说上帝在打一个小花脸的图样的时候，不

小心涂上了一大块墨渍；要是他是个高个儿，他就是柄歪头的长枪；要是他是个矮个儿，他就是块刻坏了的玛瑙坠子；要是他多讲了几句话，他就是个随风转的风标；要是他一声不响。他就是一块没有知觉的木头。(41)

In this utterance, Hero is criticizing Beatrice's mockery of man. Serval metaphors are used in this utterance. Man is compared to a "blot" "lance", "agate", "vance" and"block". The syntactic structure of "if + an adjective" is repeated and the logical subject and predicate structure of "the gentleman should be" is omitted several times, forming parallelism. What is worth noting is the opposite meaning of the three groups of adjectives. After reading the former two groups of adjectives with the opposite meaning, readers naturally expect the meaning of the next group of adjectives to be also opposite. Therefore, the processing effort is reduced and relevance is increased. Due to the meaning of the metaphor "sister" "blot" and "lance ill-headed" being derogatory based on the communicative clues arising from the concept "backward", readers can infer the following metaphor is also meant to mock man, reducing the processing effort. Both two translators apply direct translation by retaining the original communicative clues. The basic original syntactic structure and communicative clues are retained. Zhu Shenghao renders the syntactic structure "if…, …" into ""要是他……他就是……" with subjects added, while Liang Shiqiu renders it into "如果……便是/那么……" without adding subjects. Comparatively speaking, the slight modifications to the original syntactic structure by Zhu can reduce the processing effort of Chinese readers and make the sentences easier for Chinese readers to understand. Though both translations retain the original syntactic structure of parallelism, from the perspective of processing effort, Zhu's version is better at conveying communicative clues arising from syntactic properties in this context.

4. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the translation of metaphors in *Much Ado About Nothing* from the perspective of relevance translation theory. With the help of communicative clues arising from logical entry, encyclopedic entry, and syntactic properties, readers can make inferences about the communicator's intention and achieve adequate contextual effects. If a translator misunderstands the original text, he cannot produce a translation that is similar to the original text, so the translator's understanding of the original text is essential for translation. The introduction of communicative clues is of paramount importance for the translator's interpretation of the original text. Retaining communicative clues is retaining the style of the original text to some degree, realizing faithfulness in translation. As to the translation of metaphors, although metaphors reflect the culture of the source language, the translator has the responsibility to embrace the source language and enrich the language and culture of the target language. Due to the cultural barrier, if the translator translates directly without considering the difference between cognition of source language readers and target language readers, the processing effort of target language readers will be increased and the translator will fail in inferencing the intention of the original communicator and achieving optimal relevance The above examples show that Liang Shiqiu and Zhu Shenghao apply different strategies in different situations and that neither of them apply one single strategy throughout the whole translated text. In order to convey communicative clues in a better way, they may change their translation strategy in some cases. Zhu Shenghao prefers indirect translation strategy in general, but he also applies direct translation in some contexts. Therefore, a good translator is the one who combines different translation strategies to present the communicative clues and convey the intention of the original.

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