

Features of Journalistic English and Its Translation Strategy

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Abstract: Nowadays, with the development of globalization and information, English has been an important tool for communication among people from different countries. Journalistic English, as an important medium in cross-cultural environment, embraces its unique features and style. This paper states the development of journalistic English and analyzes its features from the lexical, syntactic, rhetorical and stylistic perspectives. Simultaneously, it focuses on the literal translation, free translation and inductive translation methods as to how to translate the English news. This paper aims to acquaint people with more understanding of journalistic English and make the translated versions more Chinese-oriented and appealing.

Keywords: Journalistic English; Features; Translation

1. Significance of the Study

Today, English, as a global language, serves 80% news information. Journalistic English has become an indispensable part in people's daily life and attracts more attention. Journalistic English is a kind of writing to report the events, facts, or opinions that people do not know before they read your story. It is divided into many kinds such as news reporting, features, interviews, advertisements. People get to know the current world events and the advanced science and technology in time. Today, the study of journalistic English and its translation strategy may help people with a full understanding of it and translate it properly.

2. Literature Review

Recent years, a lot of scholars make analyses on journalistic English features and its translation strategy from different angles. These provide more information for my study.

Liu Qizhong points out the features of journalistic English and its translation standards and principles in the book *English-Chinese News Translation*.

Wu Bo and Zhu Jianping put forward the concept of news and its features from the lexical, syntactic, rhetorical and stylistic aspects and analyze different translation methods in selected passages, editor-translator in the book *News Translation: Theory and Practice*.

Wang Ninghui studies journalistic English from the features of literary form and finds the translation disciplines with the details on the linguistic style, lexicology, grammar, language difference, cultural factor, last gives a special suggestion on the sentence-making of news affairs in the thesis *On Translation of Journalistic English from Its Features*.

3. Journalistic English

Journalistic English is a kind of writing used to report news. This section will state the development and features of journalistic English.

3.1 The Development of Journalistic English

With the global development of economy and information, a medium is needed to promote the communication among different countries. Journalistic English emerges and meets this point. It serves as a transfer platform for information at the home and abroad. That is, it becomes a very important part of country's overseas communication means and develops continuously. Covering a wide range, it combines with mass media and has strong permeability. Therefore, it can cross the hindrances to fulfill its function.

In our country, journalistic English sprang up and developed since the reform and opening up and the contact with outside world. And much information is conveyed to other countries by means of it. Meanwhile, people at home started to know more about the outside world.

3.2 The Lexical Features of Journalistic English

The journalist and editor of English news often use the vocabulary skillfully to emphasize the topic. What are the lexical features of journalistic English?

3.2.1 Use of Simple Words and Acronyms

Generally speaking, news reports force on the effectiveness, the faster the better. To improve the spread of news, the journalist should avoid using long and complex words instead of the short and simple words. These short and simple words are easy to remember and understand for people. And it is easier to circulate than most of words. Therefore, simple words and acronyms are used widely.

3.2.2 Use of Blending Words

The audiences of journalistic English are wide and they are on different educational levels. That requires the journalists to use the words which are easy to understand and vivid. The most effective way is blending and mixing the familiar words from different fields to express their meaning. The general blending words are the name of the country capital, the famous building, the leader and the relative institution of this country or government. Meanwhile, the newsman also borrows many words in sports, military, business, technology, literature and so on.

3.2.3 Use of Vivid Words and Spoken Sayings

To attract the readers' attentions and interests, the reporter needs to apply different methods to make the news reports more graphic. For example, Luxury cars steal the show in NYC. In this sentence "steal the show" means attracting the most attention, publicity, etc. The word "steal" is used vividly.

3.3 The Syntactic Features of Journalistic English

To understand the English news well one must know the syntactic features of journalistic English.

3.3.1 Use of Present Tense and Present Progressive Tense

Due to the obvious features of news, journalists commonly use present tense and present progressive tense to make people feel real and true. For example, A Ground War Begins Deposits Loans Rising in HK. Even after the verb "said, told, reported, added", the "that" subordinate clause often is used the present tense instead of past tense. Sometimes, present tense and present progressive can be used to instead of each other.

3.3.2 Use of Passive Voice

The passive voice is applied more in journalistic English than in other literary form to emphasize the result of time and action. And it prominently assures the receiver of news truth or action. The passive voice is commonly used to report some

natural and man-made calamities and some crimes and murders. During some news reports of war, catastrophe, tempest, accident and other aspects, the injured number which is usually concerned by people most use passive voice to point out. For example, more than 50 million acres of farmland have been submerged and grain stores damaged.

3.3.3 Use of Simple and Long Sentences

To reach the function of notification and catering to the different levels of readers, the journalists try to make the sentence structure more concise. Meanwhile, readers aim to obtain more information in short time when they reading news. So there is more simple sentence than compound sentence. And to make the sentence more concise and clear, the newsman often uses participle phrase, preposition phrase, noun phrase and infinitive phrase instead of subordinate clause. That makes the sentence structure terse and tight with more information. For instance, The Nigerian foreign ministry's offices were completely destroyed by a fire in the centre of Lagos Monday night.

3.4 The Rhetorical Features of Journalistic English

The journalists often use rhetoric devices during written news to strengthen the readability, graphics, appeal and make the news reports vivid and vigorous. The kinds of rhetoric devices are as follows:

3.4.1 Analogy

Analogy is a comparison of one thing with another thing that has similar features. For example, "the growing savings and loan scandal is a time bomb for President Bush that might not go off this year but could cause him serious political troubles by 1992". In this sentence, the journalist uses "a time bomb" to make the news vividly.

3.4.2 Metonymy

Metonymy is the act of referring to something by the name of something else that is closely connected with it, for example, using the White House for the US president or government, using the Uncle Sam for the American people.

3.4.3 Allusion

Allusion is a rhetoric device which refers to or mentions historical person, address, and event in an indirect way. For instance, there are many allusions out of *Bible* like "put new wine in old bottles" "salt of the earth" "the writing on the wall" and so on; and some in Rome and Greece mythology like "an apple of discord" "Greek gift" "the Trojan Horse".

3.5 The Stylistic Features of Journalistic English

The journalistic English forces on spreading news facts and the main features are the accuracy, simplicity and popularity. The cue is the accuracy.

3.5.1 Accuracy

The accuracy points out the coherence between the sign of language and the objective things on the aspects of time, space, shape, character. That requires the journalists to try their best to judge the quality without error and hold the quantity precisely. And the journalists should avoid having the subjective conjecture and taking a part from the whole.

3.5.2 Simplicity

Simplicity is the best method to polish language and the need of relieving the publication's space. To report more information within limited space, the journalist must take all methods to write with the concentrated and simple language.

3.5.3 Popularity

News publication is a popular medium and the readers are various. And journalistic English should be available to all readers. Therefore, popularity is one of its language features.

4. The Translation Strategy of Journalistic English

According to the features which are mentioned hereinbefore, the following will introduce some translation strategies.

4.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation indicates that in the process of translation, the translator should not only be loyal to the original content but also take original form into consideration. The journalistic English can be translated by literal translation method when the words are simple, the sentences are short, and the structures of subject-predication are obvious. Thus it not only keeps the original form but also makes the target language concise and explicit to avoid the difficulty in understanding.

4.2 Free Translation

Free translation refers to the translation that is faithful to the original meaning but has some originality on the form. This method is generally used when the words with deep meaning or many synonyms and some complex rhetoric devices in the sentence especially the relatively history allusions of English countries. People can not understand the real meaning according the surface structure, so the journalist translates the news via refining and transferring language to keep the integrated meaning.

4.3 Inductive Translation

Sometimes some long and complex sentences appear in the English news. It main reflects in a sentence with more than two grammars and various structures even many pre-modifications. To solve this problem, the translator general applies inductive translation method to translate with their own characteristics of language and reading habits of people. But the translator must understand the content deeply and fully keep the objectivity.

5. Conclusion

English news serves as a way to widen one's knowledge of international community and plays an important part in our daily life. It distinguishes itself from other styles of writing by its special features on the lexical, syntactic, rhetorical and stylistic aspects. Mastering them can be beneficial to our understanding of English news and further study, hence helps us obtain news information more quickly and makes us keep pace with the changing world.

In short, to know journalistic English is important for us to improve our English proficiency and helps to translate the news exactly. No matter what to say, the study of journalistic English is of significance.

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