

Analysis of Dialogue Translation in Jane Eyre from the Perspective of Cooperative Principle

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ABSTRACT

Jane Eyre, one of Charlotte Brontë's masterpieces, has won great popularity in the circle of English literature. There are many classic dialogues in it. The dialogues are full of wits and are of multifunction, and have been regarded as the most impressive and memorable part in this novel. This thesis aims at studying the fictional dialogue translation and analyzing the dialogue translation in Zhu Qingying's Chinese translation of Jane Eyre from pragmatic perspective, in terms of cooperative principle.

Keywords: *fictional dialogue translation, Jane Eyre, cooperative principle*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its publication in 1847, Jane Eyre has been widely read and known as one of the best novels in the circle of English literature. Ever since its first edition, it has been reprinted time and again by many famous publishing houses in the world. It also has been translated into many other languages. With the fame of the original, the Chinese versions of Jane Eyre have also won a great popularity. Since its first edition published in 1980, Zhu Qingying's version of Jane Eyre has been reprinted many times for its popularity among the readers. It has successfully translated the style of the source text in terms of the choices of words and syntactical patterns. Based on the loyalty to the source text, Zhu's version has succeeded in conveying the romantic charm of the source language and it is generally regarded as a high quality translation work.

2. DIALOGUE RESEARCH AND COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

2.1. Dialogue research

Dialogue is an indispensable part of a fiction, not only revealing characters' personality and promoting the development of the plot, but also indicating characters' status and their relationship and attracting readers' attention.[1] Dialogues occupy a great part in Jane Eyre and they can be considered as the soul of this masterpiece. Thus the translation of dialogues in Jane Eyre deserves more detailed and systematic study. When translating Jane Eyre, the translator should attach great importance to the translation of dialogues. Dialogues in a fiction are restricted by pragmatics, and the application of pragmatics is helpful for the translator to better understand the original version and reproduce its flavor in the target language.

2.2. Cooperative Principle

Quite often the speaker can mean a lot more than what he or she said literally.[6] The question is to explain how the speaker can convey more than what is literally said and how the hearer reason out the speaker's implied meaning. H. P. Grice[4] suggests that there must be some mechanisms governing the production and comprehension of these utterances. He believes that there is a set of assumptions guiding the conduct of conversation. This is what he calls the cooperative principle. This principle is related to conversational implicature.

Our daily conversation is not produced casually. Just as Grice pointed out: "Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction." In other words, it seems that we all follow such a principle: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged".[4]

(I) Maxims of quantity (concerning the amount of information to be conveyed):

(1) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).

(2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

(II) Maxims of quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true. More specifically:

(1) Do not say what you believe to be false.

(2) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

(III) Maxim of relation: Be relevant.

(IV) Maxims of manner (concerning not so much what is said as how it is said): Be perspicuous. More specifically:

(1) Avoid obscurity of expression.

- (2) Avoid ambiguity.
- (3) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- (4) Be orderly.

3. COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE AND FICYNAL DIALOGUE TRANSLATION

The important role the cooperative principle plays in dialogue translation lies in its convincing power to direct people to discover the implied meaning[5], which can hardly be inferred through the context only. It is helpful for the translator to reason out the implied meaning of source dialogue and reproduce it in the target dialogue. This paper will analyze the dialogue translation in *Jane Eyre* according to cooperative principle and its maxims and then sum up some translation crafts concerning cooperative principle.

3.1. Flouting of the maxim of quantity

When a speaker blatantly says more or less than is necessary, he or she is flouting the Quantity maxim and his or her speech generates an implicature.

Example:

“What have you been doing during my absence?”
 “Nothing particular; teaching Adele as usual.”
 “And getting a good deal paler than you were—as I saw at first sight. What is the matter?”
 “Nothing at all, sir.” [3]
 “我走以后你干了些什么？”
 “没干什么特别的事，象往常一样教阿黛勒功课。”
 “你比以前苍白多了一——我第一眼就看出来。怎么回事？”
 “一点也没什么，先生。” [8]

This dialogue happens when Jane heard the guests' insulting words towards the governess at the ball and she is ready to drop out. It is also the first time Jane and Rochester meet each other after Rochester's return to Thornfield. Rochester wants to ascertain Jane's love of him, but the latter doesn't express her real feelings for him. On the contrary, Jane just replies peacefully with “Nothing particular; teaching Adele as usual.” This implies that she doesn't care much about Rochester and she can manage everything without him. When Rochester asks Jane what has happened, she doesn't tell him the uncomplimentary comments the guests have said about the governess and responds plainly again with “Nothing at all, sir.” Obviously, Jane doesn't offer enough information and deliberately violate the maxim of Quantity. From the Chinese version we can find that the translator reproduced the author's intention and portrayed for the reader a strong-willed Jane.

3.2. Flouting of the maxim of quality

When the speaker says something untrue or for which he or she lacks adequate evidence, he or she is flouting the maxim of Quality.

Example:

“You live just below—do you mean at that house with the battlements?” ...
 “Yes, sir.”
 “Whose house is it?”
 “Mr. Rochester's.”
 “Do you know Mr. Rochester?”
 “No, I have never seen him.”
 “He is not resident then?”
 “No.”
 “Can you tell me where he is?”
 “I cannot.” [3]
 “你就住在下面——你是说有雉堞的那所房子么？”

 “是的，先生。”
 “那是谁的房子？”
 “罗切斯特先生的。”
 “你认识罗切斯特先生么？”
 “不，我从来没看见过他。”
 “这么说，他不住在这儿罗？”
 “不住在这儿。”
 “你能告诉我他在哪儿吗？”
 “不能。” [8]

This conversation takes place when Jane and Rochester meet each other for the first time and after Rochester knows that Jane lives “just below” in Thornfield. Jane answers every question Rochester asks honestly and always sticks to the cooperative principle. But Rochester doesn't follow the CP. Although he knows clearly that “just below” refers to Thornfield—his own house, he asks a series of misleading questions to give Jane the impression that he is a total stranger to either Mr. Rochester or Thornfield. He violates the maxim of Quality which requires the speaker not to say what he or she believes to be false. The reason why Rochester flouts the maxim of Quality is that he wants to get as much information as possible about Jane. Zhu's translation retains the implicature and can faithfully convey Rochester's intention.

3.3. Flouting of the maxim of relation

Sometimes, conversational implicature is generated by violating the Relation maxim. The speaker may not say anything that is explicitly related to the topic of the conversation but let the hearer interpret the possible meaning.

Example 1:

“Are you happy here?”
 “You ask rather too many questions. I have given you

answers enough for the present: now I want to read.” [3]

“你在这儿快活吗？”

“你问的问题也未免太多了。现在我已经回答了你许多问题。这会儿可要看书啦。” [8]

This is a conversation between Jane and Helen. In this dialogue, Helen’s answer has nothing to do with what Jane has mentioned, whether she is happy or not at Lowood. She just says “You ask rather too many questions … now I want to read.” Obviously, her answer violates the maxim of “being relevant”. In this way, Helen implies that Jane has asked too many questions and she has spent too much time on answering them, and now she wants to do her own reading. According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s English-Chinese Dictionary, “rather” has many meanings, such as: 1. (usu. indicating criticism, disappointment or surprise) to a certain extent; fairly; 2. to a moderate extent; quite. Here Zhu translated it into Chinese as “未免”, indicating Helen’s mood at that time vividly.

Example 2:

“You speak coolly enough; but you suffer in the conflict. You are wasting away.”

“No. If I get a little thin, it is with anxiety about my prospects, yet unsettled — my departure, continually procrastinated. Only this morning, I received intelligence that the successor, whose arrival I have been so long expecting, cannot be ready to replace me for three months to come yet: and perhaps the three months may extend to six.”

“You tremble and become flushed whenever Miss Oliver enters the schoolroom.” [3]

“你说得轻描淡写，可是你却在这个矛盾中受苦。你瘦了。”

“不，如果说我是稍微瘦了一点，那是为了还没完全确定的前途，为了一再推迟的动身而担心。就在今天早上，我还得到消息，我早就在等待的那个接替我的人三个月之内还不能准备好来接替我；三个月说不定还要拖到六个月。”

“奥立佛小姐一走进教室，你就发抖，脸红。” [8]

During this dialogue, St. John tries his best to disavow his adoration to Mrs. Oliver. He is talking about his career all the time and avoids mentioning Mrs. Oliver. However, Jane cares nothing about his career and her answer has nothing to do with what St. John mentioned. She just hits the nail on the head with St. John’s true feelings at the cost of violating the maxim of Relation by saying “You tremble and become flushed whenever Miss Oliver enters the schoolroom”. Zhu translated “whenever” as “一……就……” to show St. John’s adoration to Mrs. Oliver. In this way, Zhu conveyed Jane’s implied meaning: don’t cheat yourself anymore; everyone knows you love Mrs. Oliver. And from this expression, the reader can find that Jane is a straightforward person and never conceals her feelings.

4. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the cooperative principle and its maxims are closely connected with fictional dialogue translation. They serve as a general guideline for the translator to grasp the implicature, which generally arises from flouting the maxims of the cooperative principle. Discovery of implicature helps the translator to understand the dialogues thoroughly and reproduce them faithfully.

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