On the English Translation of Exotic Animals in the Classic of Mountains and Seas

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Abstract: This paper studies the problems of insufficient translation precision and poor effect of rare animals in "The Classic of Mountains and Seas". Through analyzing the characteristics and differences of Chinese and western literature, the author integrates the method of discription and contents of the exotic animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas according to the research results, and proposes to rely on intertextuality to carry out the translation of special exotic animals. Finally, the empirical investigation proves that the translation theory of "The Classic of Mountains and Seas" proposed in this paper has higher acceptance and approval than the traditional translation methods.

Keywords: The classic of mountains and seas; Cultural presupposition; Chinese mythology; Multimodal intertextuality reconstruction

1. Introduction

The Classic of Mountains and Seas is a book which is the basic source of ancient Chinese mythology. Its contents are jumbled and varied, and most readers are confused and difficult to understand. This is because it originated in ancient China. Its initial readers' interpretation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas integrated other materials and depended on the participation of external texts. Moreover, most translators themselves are source language readers and accept various materials and information. Therefore, their interpretation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas inevitably differs[1]. Therefore, the requirements for translators are raised. They need not only bilingual ability to reach the translation goal, but also bicultural ability to make the translation close to real life and easy for readers to understand[2]. A clear point of view in this study is that the dissemination of Chinese myths to the outside world must be done from a macro perspective and under a multi-modal narrative system. It is not possible to simply translate classical texts to achieve content conversion, but to combine texts with reality for intra-lingual translation and intra-lingual intertextual rewriting, thus forming a dynamic intertextual space interwoven with each other. On this basis, we will jointly promote the overseas dissemination of Chinese myths and the reconstruction of multimodal intertextuality.

2. On the English Translation of Exotic Animals in the Classic of Mountains and Seas

2.1. Translation characteristics of Chinese and western literature

Myth was originally formed as a form of social consciousness based on the summary of the life experience of primitive society. Therefore, the similar life experience shared by early people makes the myth systems of the whole world have certain similarities. Many popular myth themes show some intertextual color[3]. Many of the ancient exotic animals recorded in The Classic of Mountains and Seas are verified to be real and some are imaginary animals based on reality. The ancients had a deeper understanding of foreign animals[4]. In the process of translation, intertextuality is usually adopted. This method plays an active role in the process of constructing the translator's cultural presupposition of the source language. The realization of the whole process needs to rely on intertextuality to obtain sufficient non-shared cultural presupposition to make the translation better meet the reader's reading needs. In order to better carry out accurate translation of animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas, this paper analyzes them from the perspective of multiple English versions, starting from the concept of cultural presupposition, and adopts the method of combining qualitative research and case study to carry out relevant research. In order to facilitate readers to check and understand, most of the translated books are accompanied by a Chinese and English animal name comparison table in phonetic order[5]. Combined with the English-Chinese translation features of semantic information, alignment is preprocessed to form a phrase tree for English literature translation. The translation steps are as follows:

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International Journal of Intelligent Information and Management Science
ISSN: 2307-0692, Volume 8, Issue 2, April, 2019

Selecting exotic animals to describe lexical attributes and analyzing the syntactic and semantic features of the original works;

Training the features to form decoding sentences;

The English translation of sentences was evaluated by experts and the evaluation results were recorded.

Vocabulary corresponds to detention.

According to the alignment features, part-of-speech features are labeled, and then output into English phrase tree node attributes.

In order to describe the rare animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas, the reverse transcription grammar is adopted for the transformation grammar of the description and expression form and the structural association in English translation form. When the sentence is output, it is converted in real time, and the output stream is generally in two forms, one is the source language stream, that is, the Chinese language stream, and the other is the target language stream, that is, the English translation language stream, which outputs both at the same time. Reverse transformation grammar is the simplest synchronous grammar and can generate analysis tree of bilingual grammar.
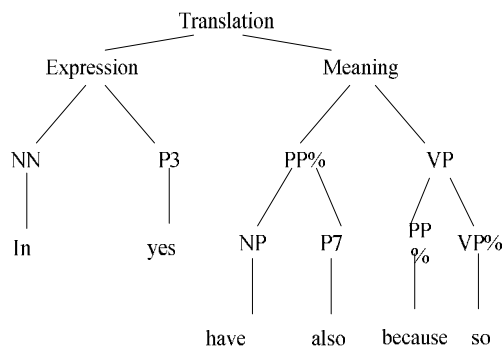

Figure 1. Application of reverse conversion grammar in English-Chinese translation

In the figure, the node symbol marked with "—"is reverse transcribed and inverted, and studied from right to left. After completion, the analysis of the next node can be carried out until the analysis of the whole tree is completed. According to the application of the above reverse conversion grammar in the English-Chinese translation tree, the special research and translation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas are carried out.

2.2. Research on the content and translation characteristics of the classic of mountains and seas

The Classic of Mountains and Seas is a fantastic and fantastic book, describing many ancient mysteries, so the author is unknown, so this book is filled with a layer of mystery[6]. The book The Classic of Mountains and Seas, which was written for a long time, has a disordered and unsystematic record of the myth of animals and strange language expressions. Therefore, it is not easy for people to interpret and study it. Most modern scholars think that it was not written by one person at one time. The content of The Classic of Mountains and Seas is mainly geographical knowledge in folklore, including mountains and rivers, Daoli, nationalities, products, medicines, sacrifices, witch doctors, etc[7]. Many well-known myths and stories have been preserved, such as A Chinese legend in Kuafu, Nuwa mending the sky, jingwei fills up the sea and Dayu controlling the floods. It is of extraordinary documentary value and has studied ancient Chinese history, geography and culture[8]. Because The Classic of Mountains and Seas is full of many images, readers and translators need to refer to and rely on other mutual texts to assist their understanding. Intertextuality shows great tension in the process of language and culture conversion, and can have a strong dynamic effect. Under the premise of "cultural presupposition", the translator can better grasp how to convert the source language version with the support of intertextuality theory, thus enabling readers to understand and accept the translation content and culture more intuitively[9]. The similar features of intertextual themes make different languages more or less connected, and there are also similar cultural presuppositions, which facilitate translators and readers to better understand the contents and implications of myths and legends. In other words, intertextual reconstruction is more conducive to the spread of different cultures on the basis of approximate cultural presupposition and is understood by the target readers. Let's give a simple example for specific analysis as follows:

The translation is as follows:

There are deities here, ten gods in all. Their name is the Guts of Girl Kua. The guts of the goddess Girl Kua turned into gods and they live in the Wilderness of Full wide. These ten gods took across wise route and settled in that place.

Therefore, it is instructive to discuss the English translation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas from the perspective of intertextuality theory and cultural presupposition. In most cases, the source language readers and the target language readers have different languages and cultural presuppositions, so the two kinds of people often have different psychology and mood. Therefore, even if the translator translates the source language myths and legends of animals directly and easily, there will still be differences in understanding[10]. However, it does not rule out that the source language version can be better understood by the target readers. Therefore, the semantic unit is studied in the process of sentence meaning translation, which can be expressed by "WSTP". the type of parameter a is name, which can be written as "1(2(3), 4)", "1(Aps, ATP)," 2(ANA) ","3 "and" 4 "as shown in tables 1 and 2.

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International Journal of Intelligent Information and Management Science
ISSN: 2307-0692, Volume 8, Issue 2, April, 2019

Table 1. Semantic unit representation

Semantic Element	Quantity Type	Chinese Expressions	English Expressions
1(#Nps# NTP)	2(Nps NTP)	A1is A	A1 is A
2(#NNA)	1(NNA)	A	A
3	0	Girl Kua	Girl Kua
4	0	Intestine	Guts

Table 2. Semantic unit easy memory methods

Semantic Element	A Method	Represents a semantic Element
1(#Nps# NTP)	1(Nps NTP)	Is name(A1people，A2name)=ISTP(A1HU，A2TP)
2(#NNA)	2(NNA)	(A)=(ALN)
3	3	Girl Kua

Among them, "WSTP (noun or pronoun related to person)" and "surname | first name, name", the type of WSTP(A, b) parameter x is the thing meaning corresponding to noun and pronoun related to translation content, and the type of WSTP(A, b) parameter y is the thing meaning related to work. In addition, translation should be highly standardized. Once a word is not used properly, the central idea of the whole sentence cannot be expressed. The difference between professional terms and general-purpose languages lies in their semantics. General-purpose languages are independent of context and have uniqueness. However, when translating professional terms, we need to use the same sign to standardize them. As far as possible, terms with Chinese cultural characteristics are included in the target translation results until foreign words are finally formed. Through the above principles, the translation of animals in the Classic of Mountains and Seas is carried out.

2.3. Translation methods of exotic animals in the classic of mountains and seas

Due to the huge number of records of exotic animals in the book of mountains and seas, the exotic animals in the book of mountains and seas can be divided into two categories, namely, the real wild animals and the exotic animals imagined by human beings. The function of animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas can be divided into four types: dietotherapy, sacrifice, harm to people and auspicious sign. The traditional English translation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas mainly adopts one of the word-to-word methods for these exotic animals, and uses partial transliteration or meaning method for translation for special exotic animals, which is mentioned above and will not be repeated here. In addition, there are many descriptions about the appearance and function of exotic animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas. For example, the warbler mentioned in The Classic of Mountains and Seas is described as: The color, shape and omen of the warbler are described in one sentence. Usually, the translation of warbler is mostly as follows: wonder bird. In addition, the six-legged animals like dogs in The Classic of Mountains and Seas are translated literally or trans-

literated as follows: from-from or cong cong. However, the animal which like a sheep without a mouth called Sui is generally believed that wreck ram or mouthless ram. In The Classic of Mountains and Seas, Sui is the sacred sheep worshiped by the residents, so the latter is more accurate in the translation process.

In the book of mountains and seas, there are records of a kind of bright winter silkworm beast, birds flying at night and resting in the daytime, etc., which are rare animals. In the process of English translation, in order to better enable Chinese and foreign readers to fully and comprehensively understand and feel the myths and masterpieces of China's Crystal, so in the process of translation of the book of mountains and seas, various methods are collected to comprehensively record the translation methods, combining literal translation, transliteration, meaning and other methods for translation, such as: beast, snake, cattle etc. In addition, the animals mentioned in The Classic of Mountains and Seas have many different ancient names. For example, the records of animals such as deer and Shu in Nanshan Sutra and the records of irrigation in Qingqiu mountain strips are mostly imaginary animals. At the same time, The Classic of Mountains and Seas also records many species in destroy the evidence at present. Due to the great changes in ancient and modern living things, it is necessary to annotate them in the process of English translation. For example, when translating the words "more gold and jade on it, more rhinoceros and mantra under it" into English, rhinoceros is written Xi, while rhinoceros is written Si. The comment is:

The scientific term for Xi is Rhinoceros unicornis.

The scientific term for Si is Rhinoceros indicus.

Here distributed Xi and Si at that time but they are exterminated at the present. Animals, in ancient times, distribute in a fairly wide areas. Nevertheless, due to the reason of climate and other reason, they contracted their distributional areas, and some even became extinct. These phenomena are not rare in other places of the world, either.

In addition, in the process of translating foreign animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas, in addition to meeting the requirements of stability and accuracy, it is

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International Journal of Intelligent Information and Management Science
ISSN: 2307-0692, Volume 8, Issue 2, April, 2019

also necessary to pursue the high standards of faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance. Therefore, in the process of translation, attention should be paid to the following aspects: dynamic and static collocation, high and low collocation, and relevant composition of vocabulary selection. The specific translation steps are as follows:

①Select standard phrase syntax, translate according to part of speech and syntax, and construct semantics;

②Using English phrase sentence method to annotate semantic information and converted sentences;

③Green the contents of The Classic of Mountains and Seas, which is suitable for English features and standard sentences.

④Chinese and English words correspond to each other.

Through the above steps, the reasonable translation of the exotic animals mentioned in the ancient legend The Classic of Mountains and Seas can be effectively completed and the readers' understanding and acceptance can be improved.

3. Empirical Investigation and Analysis

In order to verify the acceptance of the translation effect more intuitively, this paper compares the traditional translation of the fragments of The Classic of Mountains and Seas with the translation of the same fragments of The Classic of Mountains and Seas under the translation theory proposed in this paper. In the survey, 10,000 people were randomly selected from the downtown area, universities and a well-known foreign language college. The number of people surveyed was 1,000. In the survey process, the randomly selected people in the downtown area were designated as Group A, where the average English level of the group A personnel was level 3 of college English in China. A random survey was conducted among the students in a university. The number of people surveyed was 1,000, and the number of people surveyed was designated as Group B, where the average English level of the group B personnel was level 4 of college English. A random questionnaire survey was carried out on the students of a key university graduate school. The survey team was divided into group C, with a total of 1,000 people. The English level of group C was CET-6. A questionnaire survey was conducted among English major students in a foreign language school. The number of respondents was 1,000. The average English level was English Major Band 4, which was recorded as Group D. A survey of professional English translators, educators and other professionals was carried out. The number of people surveyed was 1,000, which was recorded as Group E. The average English level was Grade 8 for college English majors. A survey was conducted on foreign students from English-speaking countries. The number of people surveyed was 1,000, which was rec-

orded as Group G. The seven groups of people surveyed the understanding and preference of the translation of animals in "The Book of Mountains and Seas". The survey data were statistically analyzed and plotted for convenience of observation. The following results were obtained:
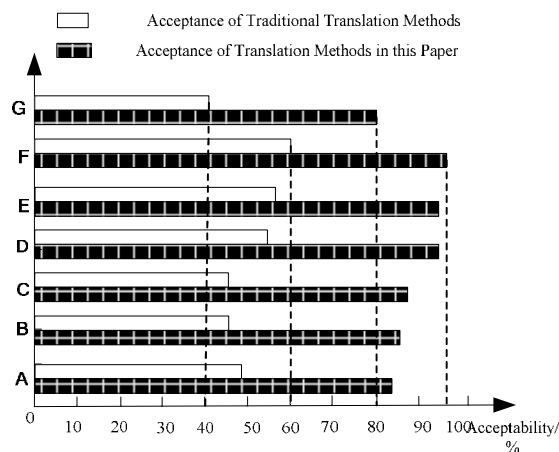

Figure 2. Statistical chart of survey results

Observing the above survey results, it is not difficult to find that compared with the traditional methods, the translation results of "Shan Hai Jing" with the theoretical methods studied in this paper are more acceptable. Relatively speaking, the acceptability of the traditional method is between 40% and 60%, while the acceptability of the method in this paper is between 80% and 96%, among which the acceptability includes: intelligibility, accuracy, refinement, etc. The observation and research results show that in the process of investigation, the three groups with the highest acceptance of traditional methods are E, F and G. This is because the overall English level of the above three groups is relatively high, so their own acceptance of English is also higher. It is worth emphasizing that during the investigation, group e and f professionals have pointed out that traditional translation methods are relatively suitable for people with weak English but strong Chinese foundation, but their overall literariness cannot meet the translation requirements of faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance. In addition, during the investigation, it was found that the acceptability of translation of foreign animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas by the G group was relatively low, either the traditional method or the present method. This is because most of the G group were foreign friends, and their overall literary attainments and understanding of traditional Chinese and public culture were relatively low, so the acceptability of translation of foreign animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas was relatively low. However, on the whole, the translation effect of "Shan Hai

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International Journal of Intelligent Information and Management Science
ISSN: 2307-0692, Volume 8, Issue 2, April, 2019

Jing" studied in this paper is more acceptable than traditional methods.

4. Concluding Remarks

A series of related researches and analyses have been carried out on the current situation and problems in the English translation of the contents related to animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas and the multimodal intertextual reconstruction based on the non-shared cultural presupposition. This paper introduces the source and main contents of The Classic of Mountains and Seas, thus leading to a series of complicated procedures from the source language reader to the translator and then to the target language reader. This paper makes a comparative analysis of the different effects of The Classic of Mountains and Seas under different translation methods. Secondly, it explains the English translation methods of foreign animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas. On the premise of fully investigating and understanding the different features and functions of different foreign animals, it illustrates some English translation methods with examples, so as to provide evidence for the English translation research of foreign animals. After that, three groups of comparative studies were carried out to compare the traditional translation methods with the one-by-one analysis methods. Under the background of multimodal intertextuality reconstruction, this paper analyzes the influence of different translation methods on the research results from the aspects of network construction, translation standards and translation level, and finally draws the conclusion that one-by-one analysis is better than traditional English translation methods. There have always been controversies about the English translation of The Classic of Mountains and Seas, but continuous research, analysis and investigation have also provided a good academic atmosphere for it to be studied. The most mysterious foreign animal-related content in The Classic of Mountains and Seas is also constantly blended with different cultural elements under the exertion of the translator's main body. When the cultural presupposition reaches a certain degree, the multimodal intertextual reconstruction research method is more conducive to promoting the English translation study of the exotic animals in The Classic of Mountains and Seas.

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