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Original Paper

A Study on Explicitation through Implicit Logical Relations of E-C Translation in Social Science Texts

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Abstract

In the E-C translation, relevant texts such as social media and big data are selected as the original texts, which showcase the progressiveness of our era, and translating these texts facilitates the public's understanding and utilization of these technologies. Given the differences in logical thinking and expression habits between English and Chinese, social science texts tend to be laden with multiple terms, complex sentence structures, and robust logical coherence. As a result, implicit logical relations frequently emerge and translators need to employ logical judgment and conduct thorough analysis at the lexical, syntactic, and discourse levels. To tackle these issues, explicitation theory has been applied, suggesting several strategies are implemented to handle implicit logical structures within the target texts.

Keywords

Implicit logical relation, Explicitation, Social Science text

1. Introduction

In recent years, information technology has persistently infiltrated and innovated across various domains such as society, economy, and daily life. Supported by a range of emerging technologies including mobile computing, the Internet of Things, and cloud computing, new application models such as social media, crowdsourcing, and virtual services have continuously expanded the scope and forms of information creation and utilization. And the development and innovation of contemporary information technology are transforming industries and generating vast amounts of data in this era of information explosion.

As a practical genre of English writing, social science texts possess distinct characteristics that set them

apart from other genres: scientific English emphasizes the coherence of narrative logic and the clarity and fluency of expression. To avoid obscure writing, translators must refrain from expressing personal emotions and subjective arbitrariness in their arguments. (Liu, 1999) And the primary function of translating social science texts is to convey and transmit information accurately between two different languages, which is also the most crucial criterion for evaluating translations. Therefore, it is imperative that translators accurately convey the original information to the intended readers. Additionally, social scientific texts are often replete with specialized terminology, complex sentence structures, long sentences, compound sentences, and strong logical coherence within the discourse. Based on these characteristics, several issues regarding implicit logical relations in the original texts can be identified: the omission of logical connectives and semantic logic and the prevalence of long and complex sentences in English, where the various functional relationships between clauses may not be clear. Consequently, this translation study proposes targeted translation strategies to address the aforementioned issues.

2. Explicitation Strategies Applied in the Translation

2.1 Explicitation of Implicit Logical Relations at Lexical Level

2.1.1 Explicitation of Connectives

Chinese, as a "paratactic" language, differs from English, which relies on "hypotaxis" through conjunctions, prepositions, and inflectional changes to convey grammatical relationships and semantic structures. This characteristic makes Chinese texts more organically connected and flexible. (Zhang, 1995) Therefore, dynamically adding logical connectives that are implicit in the source text can enhance the coherence of the target text during the translation process. This approach not only aligns better with the expressive and reading habits of Chinese but also ensures that the target text more smoothly and naturally.

Source Text: Indeed, some have argued that without the emancipatory dimension, critical security studies should not be referred to as critical.

Target Text: 事实上，有些学者认为，倘若缺失了"解放性"维度，那么批判性安全研究便失去了"批判"的本质属性。

In the source text, the sentence "without… should not..." implies conditional logic through the collocation of prepositional phrases and modal verbs, which is a typical form-fit structure. In the target text, the Chinese needs to express the logical relationship by means of function words and adding "倘若 ... 那么 ... " can make the implicit "condition-conclusion" relationship explicit, which helps to maintain the fluency and naturalness of the translation, and at the same time conveys the intention of the original text faithfully. Therefore, adding conjunctions to indicate conditions can enhance the coherence of the content between the preceding and following texts. This approach results in a more concise translation that is also more readable.

2.1.2 Explicitation of Preposition

Social science texts are characterized by concise language and a precise style with semantic meanings often being implicit within the text. And the TT may not be smooth or obscure due to improper translation of prepositions, so the method of conversion can be used to solve this problem to achieve explicitation. Liu (2001) holds that conversion is a flexible means widely used in translation. The translation technique of conversion is employed to denote the modification of the grammatical structure or expressive manner of the source text. This modification encompasses alterations in aspects such as part of speech, sentence composition, narrative perspective, and word order to enhance the clarity and fluidity of the translated text.

Source Text: Giving primacy to the role of "digital" social media narratives above and beyond the archaic "analogue", structural and social factors seem to have become quite a trend.

Target Text: 推崇"数字"社交媒体叙事的作用，而忽略传统的"模拟"叙事、摆脱结构性因素和社会因素，这似乎已成为了一种趋势。

In the source text, the prepositional phrase "above and beyond" followed by three noun structures refers to the act of surpassing expectations or standards in a substantial manner. In the target text, "above and beyond" translated to "在...之上" may not be clear enough in Chinese, which relies more on verbs to express action. Therefore, converting this prepositional phrase into a verb and using the verbs "忽略" and "摆脱" can convey the implied meaning in the original text more clearly and make the semantics more explicit. This makes the translation more comprehensive and ensures that the logical relationships are clear.

2.2 Explicitation of Implicit Logical Relations at Syntactic Level

2.2.1 Explicitation of Postposed Modifiers in Attributive Clauses

English and Chinese scientific articles each possess distinct characteristics, and even within the same genre, their structures, modes of expression, and styles may vary. Traditional grammar categorizes attributive clauses into two types: restrictive attributive clauses, which limit and modify the antecedent, and non-restrictive attributive clauses, which provide descriptive or explanatory information. Some attributive clauses, including both restrictive and non-restrictive ones, have a weak modifying effect on the antecedent. Thus, it is essential to identify these logical relationships within the original text and explicitly convey these meanings. (Zheng, 2003) For relatively complex and lengthy attributive clauses, a strategy of postposing modifiers can be adopted to avoid excessive length and enhance clarity in the translated text.

Source Text: As such, the early critical work done in the discursive turn by the Copenhagen school which broke open the security studies discipline has been widely critiqued for a poorly defined sense of interdisciplinarity and a "methodological elitism" that focuses too much on the speech of dominant actors.

Target Text: 哥本哈根学派在话语转向进程中开创的批判安全研究范式，因跨学科性界定模糊、

且深陷"方法论精英主义"窠臼(过度聚焦于主导行为体的言说实践)，而遭受学界广泛批评。

In the source text, the attributive clause introduced by "which" contains a nested attributive clause introduced by "that." If translated directly into Chinese, this would result in an overly long sentence with many repetitive "的," making it awkward and inconsistent with the natural expression habits of Chinese. Therefore, in the target text, a strategy of postposing the attributive clauses has been adopted. By separating the attributive clauses into independent sentences, the main subject is highlighted without compromising reader comprehension, thereby creating a more fluent sentence structure in the TT.

2.2.2 Explicitation of Logical Relationships in Attributive Clauses

In the C-E translation, the conversion refers to the translation technique whereby, due to differences in grammatical rules and expressive habits between the two languages, the original meaning of English cannot be directly rendered into Chinese. Therefore, while ensuring that the original meaning is preserved, the translation requires appropriate changes to align with the expressive forms of the target language. (Ouyang, 2017) The objective of the conversion is to convert the parts of speech, voice, or sentence types from the English original into corresponding forms that not only faithfully convey the original content but also conform to the stylistic conventions of the target language.

Source Text: This is in many ways true also of international relations more broadly, where reliance has been on deductive analysis of specific case studies or more general observations on states and the nature of the international system.

Target Text: 这一论断同样适用于更广义的国际关系研究领域，因为其方法论路径往往局限于两种范式：要么基于特定案例的演绎分析，要么聚焦于国家行为体及国际体系本质特征的宏观层面一般性观察。

In the source text, the clause introduced by "where," although formally an attributive clause, functions as an adverbial clause of cause when analyzed logically. Therefore, using the conversion to translate it into an adverbial clause more effectively highlights the focus of the passage. In the target text, a careful analysis of the logical relationship within the attributive clause reveals that what appears to be a modifying relationship contains an implicit causal relationship. Consequently, the translator has transposed the clause to reflect a causal relationship, thereby enhancing the coherence of the passage.

2.2.3 Explicitation through Segmentation and Reorganization

When dealing with sentences that contain parenthetical elements, it is crucial for translators to consider how to appropriately handle these insertions. And the translation often requires the use of explicit cohesive methods to establish clear connections. (Li, 2005) Therefore, the segmentation and reorganization method are employed for social science texts with multiple parenthetical structures. This approach involves breaking down the sentence into smaller parts, analyzing the deep relationships between the parenthetical elements and the main sentence, and reorganizing the information according to the logical sequence of the target language.

Source Text: Social media has been conceptualized as locked in a complex struggle between

emancipation and control, where causes can use social media for emancipatory projects, but thus open themselves up to new forms of censorship, surveillance and control.

Target Text: 社交媒体被视为解放与控制之间复杂斗争的拉锯战。一方面，人们可以利用社交媒体推动解放事业，而另一方面，这也使他们自身受到新的审查、监视和控制。

In the source text, the clause introduced by "where," functioning as a parenthetical element, implicitly contains an attributive relationship with the preceding text, and is further connected by "but" indicating a contrast. In the target text, it is crucial to carefully consider the positional relationships of these parenthetical elements. In this sentence, there is an inherent logical sequence, which should be restructured and reorganized during the translation process. Instead of directly translating "where″ and ″but,″ they should be rendered as ″一方面...而另一方面...″ to achieve the segmentation of sense-group and reorganization, thus enhancing the logical coherence and readability of the translated text.

2.3 Explicitation of Implicit Logical Relations at Discourse Level

2.3.1 Explicitation of Temporal and Spatial Order

Language inherently exhibits linear characteristics, with English typically following an "event-location-time" sequence for linear expression, whereas Chinese tends to follow a "time-location-event" sequence. Additionally, English often places temporal and locative adverbials at the end of sentences, while Chinese frequently positions them at the beginning. The Principle of Temporal Sequence (PTS) posits that the relative order of two syntactic units is determined by the temporal sequence of the states they represent within their conceptual domain. (Wang, 2017) The order of the preceding sentence (S1) and the subsequent sentence (S2) often corresponds to the temporal relationship between the events they describe. Simply put, S1 occurs before S2.(Wang, 2017)

Source Text: To some extent the information that is there, was there before but because of the way it is now collected and kept electronically, you can put more of it together, so you can hold data of a complexity and size infinitely greater than what it has been previously.

Target Text: 在某种程度上，这些信息以前就已经存在，但由于现在是以电子方式收集和保存，所以人们可以将更多的信息整合在一起，从而掌握比以往更复杂、规模更大的数据。

In the source text, it contains explicit logical connectives, namely "because" and "so," indicating cause and effect. In the target text, "so" is placed at the beginning of the previous sentence, making the result more hierarchical and progressively structured. By contrasting the current situation with the past, this approach highlights the temporal sequence and causal relationships more effectively and narratives in their chronological order ensures that the TT more smoothly and naturally.

2.3.2 Explicitation of Focal Shift

A distinguishing feature of Chinese is its strong logical coherence, which is characterized by the consistent application of a cause-effect or premise-result narrative sequence. Events are narrated according to their development and logical relationships, a method that contrasts sharply with the result-priority principle often observed in English. When translating, it is essential to make the logical relationships explicit and clearly express the causal logic in the translated text. In English, the main part

of the sentence often constitutes the structural focus, but this does not necessarily align with the semantic focus of the sentence. Therefore, in the process of E-C translation, there are notable differences in grasping the semantic focus and its positional shifts. And extracting the central information of a sentence becomes our primary task; only by identifying the semantic focus of the sentence and then rearranging, recombining, and adjusting the sentence elements can we ensure the quality of the translation.

Source Text: This observation is at the crux of the broader process of scientific enquiry because disciplines only expand and progress, and new disciplines emerge, when somehow the definition of what actually counts as such is expanded.

Target Text: 该观点正是更广泛的科学探索过程的关键所在，因为只有在一定程度上对所作研究的定义进行扩展时，学科才会发展进步，新学科才会出现。

In the source text, the sentence exhibits a causal relationship. In the target text, it can be clarified through the technique of focal shift, placing emphasis on the subject that needs to be highlighted, thereby making the cause-and-effect relationship more explicit. Consequently, the positions of cause and effect are rearranged with the use of a "when" clause to indicate the cause, thereby bringing the sentence's focus to the fore. This approach highlights "definitional expansion" as a fundamental reason for the development of the discipline rather than a mere temporal condition, enhances the logical rigor of the sentence, and clarifies the semantic focus so that readers can more easily grasp the core message.

3. Summary

Firstly, the source text contains a substantial amount of information and a significant amount of specialized content, making it difficult for the translator to achieve accuracy through resource consultation and repeated revisions due to a lack of sufficient experience. This highlights the need for the translator to strengthen their cross-disciplinary knowledge base. Secondly, the translator's efficiency and the quality of the translation should be improved. There is a tendency towards Chinglish thinking, resulting in mechanical translations and poor sentence component analysis, which leads to reduce translation's efficiency and more practice is needed to address these issues. Finally, dealing with the explicitation of implicit logical relationships has always been challenging. The problems summarized and the translation strategies proposed in this paper may not be comprehensive and still require further improvement and expansion. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this paper can serve as a parallel text, providing ideas and references for future research on related topics. In future studies and work, the translator will continue to work diligently, further researching relevant knowledge in the field of translation to overcome own limitations and deficiencies.

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