

On the Translation of Network English

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Abstract

As a novelty, internet English has similarity and peculiarity with common English, no matter in word-formation or feature. This is determined by the special communicational media—internet. It is clear that web—English neologisms play a very important role over the period from the birth of Internet up to now. The appearance of new internet English words is an inevitable phenomenon of social development and linguistic evolution. The feature and form of its word-formation have a distinct flavor of modern times. As the tool for delivering internet information, internet English covers various kinds of matters in our life. Therefore, it is greatly necessary for us to analyze the translation methods of network English, so as to be helpful for Internet users. This thesis analyzes several means of translating the Internet English into Chinese.

Key words: Network English; Word-formation; Feature; Translation

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INTRODUCTION

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There are three types of words according to their appearance and disappearance: old words, new words and existing words. In the course of time old words die out, new words are added and existing words change their

meanings. So the vocabulary of language is in a state of almost continuous change.

From the linguistic point of view, we know that vocabulary not only changes but also changes quickly. Changes in pronunciation and grammar are much slower than changes in vocabulary. When a new product is made, a new conception comes into man's thought, and a new name must be found, that is, a new word appears in the language. Therefore neologisms are products of this change.

Neologisms are newly coined words or words that are given new meaning to fit new situation because of social, economic, political, cultural, scientific and technical changes in human society. In short, neologisms are new words and expressions. They are also called in vogue words, that is, the newly popular and much used words.

With the popularity of Internet, English develops and changes as a main language in Internet. However, the majority of netizens are young people, who are filled with wisdom and creativity and pursue the humorous linguistic style that can inspire other people's interest and attention. In order to achieve efficiency and fluency of communication, a great number of new words and expressions are created. The appearance of new internet English words is an inevitable phenomenon of social development and linguistic evolution. The feature and form of its word-formation have a distinct flavor of modern times. As the tool for delivering internet information, internet English covers various kinds of matters in our life. Therefore, studying the new internet words and mastering the translation skills of internet English will help us understand and apply to internet information, contribute to the research of intercultural communication under the network context and the word-formation of English language, and conduce to the healthy development of Internet English, the teaching of language and the compilation of new dictionaries. Therefore, it is greatly necessary for us to analyze the translation methods of network English, so as to be helpful for Internet users.

1. TRANSLATION OF NETWORK ENGLISH

As we all know, translation is a rather difficult job with so many aspects to attend to. The process of translation consists of two inevitable phases: comprehension and expression. In general, comprehension is of foremost importance, and expression is expectedly a natural consequence of thorough comprehension. As for comprehension, the translator has to work out the deep structure of the source language text.

In order to translate accurately and efficiently, we should learn both English and Chinese well, and at the same time we must be good at grasping the various differences between the two languages. Then we should try to choose the best translation strategy and accomplish our task. In translation, first of all, we must choose a best strategy, which requires us to work out a target text appropriate both in meaning and style. How to choose the best strategy is one of the most important parts during the translation process. The choice of translation strategies is a troublesome point in the translation practice which requires painstaking efforts.

To translate the neologisms of network English, we should grasp its characteristics, with due consideration of the aim of translation. The vocabulary of network English has various means of word-formation, so we should adopt flexible translation methods according to their different characteristics, thus transmitting the new connotations of the English words. Besides, translation is a purposeful activity. We should take corresponding methods and means according to its goal, and express the meanings of neologisms in network English faithfully, and reflect its key content in English in any possible way. As to the translation of the network neologisms, we can adopt "literal translation," "free translation," "transliteration," "mixing translation," "zero translation" according to the actual necessity.

2. LITERAL TRANSLATION

Literal translation has been widely adopted in the translation of network English.

When the literal meanings of the neologisms are very clear and easily acceptable to target language readers, literal translation can be taken. For example, *cybercafé* means 网吧; *online shopping* means 网上购物; *software* means 软件; *hardware* means 硬件; *freeware* means 免费软件; *clicks ratio* means 点击率; *cyber world* means 网络世界; *cyber-attack* means 网上攻击; *cyber lover* means 网络情人; *cyber-mall* means 网上超市; *network station* means 网站; *refresh* means 刷新; *kick* means 踢; *platform* means 平台 and so on.

Some words on the web can be defined according to the analysis of the dictionary, and can be accepted by most people. For example: The original meaning of the word *menu* is a list of dishes that may be ordered at a meal.

And gradually it refers to a list of options on a computer screen, from which a user can choose. Another case in point is the word *virus*; it refers to any of various types of germs that are a cause of disease medically. Nevertheless, it can also be understood as a computer code that is inserted into a program to destroy information or cause errors. Apart from those, the word *chat* usually means face-to-face communication, however, now we often refer to communication through the internet by using this word.

These words can be translated very easily by interpreting the apparent meaning of the original words. It will not mislead the readers' understanding of the words, and what is more, it will make the translation vivid and clear.

3. FREE TRANSLATION

In some cases, it is very difficult for the direct literal translation to fulfill the task of expressing what is included in the source language, while keeping in the normal usage of the target language. Then we will consider the method of free translation. As far as terminology, especially specialized terminology and diction are concerned, we have good reasons to adopt free translation.

In terms of neologisms of network English, it is not so easy to find the corresponding definition, and there is no standard means of translation. Therefore, under many circumstances, as far as these words are concerned, we can give them a definition according to their original meanings. For example: the word *flash* in English means a quick showing of a bright light. Nevertheless, the word *flash* used in computing can also refer to the software that can create beautiful navigation interface and some other peculiar effects. On the web those people who use *flash* to make animation are called 闪客.

Free translation is an alternative approach which is used mainly to convey the meaning and spirit of the original without keeping the original sentence patterns or figures of speech. This approach is most frequently adopted when it is really impossible to translate the original literally and we cannot keep the literal meaning and the figurative meaning together. In this case we can change the form into one that target readers are familiar with, so as to transmit the meaning implied in the original.

4. TRANSLITERATION

Transliteration is usually used to translate personal names, names of places and other nouns from one language into another language on the pronunciation level, and it is also called "sound-translation" by some people. Although transliteration has many problems, it is still the main method in translating personal names, and has the advantage of keeping the foreign flavor and introducing the foreign naming system into the TL.

For the Chinese language, this is by no means a passive process, but a process of active creation and adaptation to the Chinese way of thought. In order to transliterate the meaning of a word correctly, one must master its cultural connotation in the source language and try his best to find a word suitable for the Chinese cultural habits. For example, *cool* is translated as 酷, aspirin (阿司匹林), cocaine (可卡因), gene (基因), radar (雷达), engine (引擎). These words are accepted by people and kept alive in the Chinese language, while some other words died out as time went by. Therefore, in transliteration, the translator should take into account the traditions of the Chinese language and culture. To a large extent transliteration is indeed an effective way to enrich the Chinese language.

When the word in English language does not have a corresponding word in Chinese, the translator should not adhere rigidly to the language form of English and literal meaning. He/she can go on to translate in Chinese characters which are similar in pronunciation of English directly. Some may even involve the intended meaning. This is a quite direct and simple means of translation, which can also contain an exotic flavor. For instance, copy (拷贝); AIDS (艾滋病); Utopia (乌托邦); talk show (脱口秀); clone (克隆) and so on. Apart from this, a good case in point is the word *fans*, and it is translated as 粉丝. The word fan is defined as an enthusiastic admirer of a sport, hobby or well-known person. For example: *sports fan*, *movie fan*, *football fan* and so on. Besides, the word *blogger* is translated as 博客. It turns out that the full spelling of the word blog is *web log*, and the Chinese meaning of the word is 网络日志. Later, *web log* is abbreviated as *blog*, while *blogger* refers to those people who write blog. Specifically speaking, the word blog refers to a web site that contains online personal journal with reflections, comments and often hyperlinks provided by the writer.

On the whole, transliteration is an effective means to enrich the Chinese vocabulary and it is also a cultural phenomenon. It should take the culture of the target language into consideration and be adapted to both its linguistic system and the cultural system. On the other hand, transliteration is also a mirror of culture and it reflects different cultural aspects. Therefore, we ought to make good use of transliteration to make our mother tongue more colorful and flexible.

5. MIXED TRANSLATION

Mixed translating refers to applying two kinds of different translation methods in the course of translating. It gives consideration to different aspects of the original language, thus becomes an effective means of translation.

It is very common to mix transliteration and free translation. For example, Internet is dealt with as inter and net. Here both transliteration and free translation are applied. Another excellent case in point is the translation

of the word *hacker*. Through constant practice, the word *hacker* is translated as 黑客, which implies both the pronunciation of the word *hacker* and the symbolic meaning of the word black simultaneously.

Another good case in point is the word *Pentium*, which is originally defined as number five, referring to the upgraded products after 486. Obviously, if we adopt the method of literal translation, the effect will not catch so much attention. Nevertheless, if we adopt the method of free translation, translating it as 奔腾, which can not only produce momentum, but also bring about the effect of speed. Furthermore, this kind of translation can play the role of prompting the original meaning. *Yahoo* is the famous Internet searching engine, which originates from the name of a beast in human shape, and it can also refer to all kinds of beasts and lower animals. Yahoo represents those tourists who are poor and ill-educated. It is translated as 雅虎. This translation is quite creative and unforgettable. The translation of *Each* (易趣), *Sohu* (搜狐), *Sina* (新浪), *E-mail* (伊妹儿) is also rather innovative, which can ignite people's imagination. Another good case in point is the homophonic of English letters and Chinese letters. For example: *www.u-i.cn* can be translated as 友爱网, which can also have the similar pronunciation of *you and I* (你和我). This kind of homophonic treatment can be romantic, reserved and creative.

To my mind, mixed translation is a very helpful method in dealing with practical issues that we should handle according to the circumstances. Since we can adopt some translation methods flexibly under different conditions, it will be much easier for us to finish the translation task in real practice.

6. ZERO TRANSLATION

The present studies of zero translation remain problematic in definition, motivation, category and application. The strategies to deal with the problem to lie in distinguishing the concept of zero translation from non-translation, transliteration, transference, formal translation, etc. in the criteria of mechanism and motivation, and investigation of translator's translation view in his choice of zero translation.

Sometimes the meanings of some network English neologisms are widely known to the people before people find the appropriate translation. In this way, people get used to the English expressions and no longer translate them into Chinese. And after a while, this kind of words has become a sort of regular term. For example: *IT=Information Technology*; *CPU=Central Processing Unit*.

Some terms of computer software are frequently used by professionals and netizens. There is no need to translate them into Chinese, and what is more, it is rather difficult to translate them with accurate and brief words, so it is much better to keep the original word, such as *Windows*,

Facemail and so on. *Facemail* is a kind of software which is developed by the company named *LifeFx*. It can make a fictitious person read the content of users' e-mails. *Facemail* can induce people's imagination. In such cases, people get used to the English expressions and after a long time, this kind of words has become a sort of regular term. So it will even be worse to translate it into Chinese.

The emergence of zero translation is an inevitable phenomenon. Zero translation has both positive and negative roles. The application principles of zero translation should be taken into consideration in order to employ its positive role and to avoid its negative role. In addition, zero translation may be applied under certain circumstances. We should use it reasonably rather than blindly. Zero-translation puts a great challenge for translators, which indicates that translation still has a long way to go and new problems will pop up from time to time.

Translatability and untranslatability always seem opposite to each other; however, it is a matter of degree, since there are similarities and differentiations between cultures at the same time. Untranslatability indicates the limitation of translation, which is relative rather than absolute. To some extent, the degree of translatability depends on the relationship between the cultures involved. The closer the relationship, the higher the degree.

Nowadays, with the rapid development of science and technology and the increasing internal links of the international economic and cultural systems, the world is getting smaller and smaller and becoming a global village. Communication among the people in the global village is growing more and more frequent. Translation, which acts as a bridge between different languages and cultures, contributes significantly to cross-cultural communication; translators always have to make a choice of which translation strategy should be adopted to deal with the differences between the SL-culture and the TL-culture. Translation is in its essence a kind of intercultural communication and is closely related to culture. Translation and culture share an interdependent relationship. First, translation definitely involves culture. Second, translation is a means of transmitting cultures ever since countries and languages have been in contact with each other. Translation serves as a bridge between different cultures. Third, translation promotes cultural development by importing foreign cultural nourishments and transplanting the outside cultures into its own cultural environments, thus enhancing the improvement of the world cultures on the whole and leading to the bettering of the world civilization. The last but not the least, culture exerts a great influence on translation. For example, the translator's aesthetic view and style and options will be affected by the culture in which he finds himself.

As far as network English is concerned, we should try our best to figure out the real intention and implication of

the original words and sentences. The most appropriate translation strategy will vary according to the text-type being translated and the purpose of the translation task.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to reveal the evolution of network English through explaining the lexical features of the neologisms in web-English, in order that we can both grasp many universal rules of the ever changing vocabulary and study the lexical features of the neologisms in web-English. Besides, the aim of this thesis is also to help non-native speakers of English feel easier to communicate online and make more intensive use of the Interact resources. In addition, this thesis manages to make more or less contribution to the second-language learning.

By a detailed analysis of features of network English at different levels, this study is hoped to be beneficial or helpful in the following two aspects:

Firstly, it will be beneficial to the evaluation of network English. From the analysis we have got to know that network English is a new language variety. It is a brand-new member to language family. Its development is still in its initial stage. With the popularity of network English, more people will encounter it inevitably in the future. Although the debate on the network English will continue as it develops, we should treat network English tolerantly.

Secondly, this study will be helpful to the development of online learning. The Internet has already begun to be applied in educational field, but chat rooms as a teaching technique has received little attention, probably because network English in chat rooms always enjoys a negative reputation due to its potential to become chaotic since students and teacher communicating simultaneously can obscure the message and make it difficult to follow a conversation. However, well-managed chat can provide powerful online learning experiences and add a dynamic dimension to an online course. So this study, to some extent, will provide a referential value to the development of online learning.

The Internet and people's life are changing every day. So we should realize that network English in the present stage is still far from maturity. New changes and developments are going on every day and more are waiting for constant exploration and studying.

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