

Rhetorical Effects of Puns in English and American Literature and Their Translation

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Abstract: With the continuous development of China's science and technology and economic globalization, literary works can not be ignored as bridges between people in various countries and regions. However, in British and American literary works, most famous writers like to use pun rhetoric methods in their literary works, making it more difficult for readers to understand the meaning of the works. The purpose of this article is to study the rhetorical effects of puns in English and American literature and their translation. This article analyzes the meaning and form of puns, and studies the rhetorical effects and translation methods of puns in depth. The translation strategies include equivalent literal translation and free translation. This article uses a combination of literature research, theoretical analysis, and statistical analysis. The experimental object is four literary works. Ten chapters of each work are randomly selected to count the number of puns using translation strategies in these ten chapters. Statistics show that more translation strategies are used for equivalent literal translation. The experimental statistics of this paper show that the number of equivalent translations is 116 and the number of free translations is 32.

1. Introduction

As one of the important rhetoric methods, the use of puns can make the language euphemistic, humorous, and wonderful. Therefore, the application of puns is becoming more and more widely in both Chinese and English rhetoric. Especially in Chinese and foreign works, puns have been paid more and more attention by Chinese and foreign scholars. The importance of the pun made people realize the necessity of studying it. Linguists, especially applied linguists and translators, have paid attention to them to varying degrees, and studied the characteristics and classification of puns from various angles. Although many scholars have conducted long-term research on puns, they are not very systematic. Most scholars are limited to rhetoric or stylistic aspects. Since the 1950s, with the rise of comparative linguistics, many scholars have shifted their focus from the previous single language model to the level of comparative research. As one of the more common rhetoric methods, English puns have attracted much attention from Chinese and foreign linguists. Due to the short rise of comparative linguistics and the large and complex linguistic theoretical system, the contrast between Chinese and English puns presents multiple perspectives and layers.

There are many forms of pun, which is a kind of rhetorical technique. It has certain fun and skills in the process of use, and can also achieve the function of pun in language expression, which is also the goal that many people pursue in writing [1-2]. Homophone translation is based on the similarity between homonyms in the author's language. Ancient Chinese poets often used homonyms to write poems and memoirs. Based on the function of puns, using puns can make the written Poems are more interesting and interesting [3-4]. When translating, we must pay attention to the connection of the context. Based on the context, the homonyms corresponding to the word are determined according to the homonyms given by the author, and the meaning that the author really wants to express can be inferred to accurately translate the author's intended expression meaning [5-6].

This article makes a simple analysis of the meaning and form of puns, and studies the rhetorical

effects and translation methods of puns. The experimental part of this paper uses a combination of literature research, theoretical analysis, and statistical analysis. Four literary works are selected, and ten chapters of each work are randomly selected to count the number of puns using translation strategies in these ten chapters. Statistics show that more translation strategies are used for equivalent literal translation.

2. Method

2.1 Pun

Language is one of the main ways people express emotions. Its usage is constantly changing, and puns are one of the most interesting and proficient rhetoric, a form of language expression that sometimes appears here and there, often with unexpected results [7-8]. English puns mainly use homonyms, ambiguities, and other phenomena in English, which cause words, phrases, and sentences to express double meanings in some cases, thus making the language concise, lively, and vivid. This has the effect of humor, wit, irony and fun [9-10]. Generally, the main forms of puns are divided into two categories: audio puns and semantic puns, each of which has a different subdivision.

(1) Voice pun

Homophone puns are two words that have the same pronunciation but different spellings and meanings and are often used cleverly in works to form puns [11]. Proximity pun refers to the pronunciation of two words or phrases that are similar, but have different meanings, so that the reader has different pertinence and pun.

(2) Semantic method, which is divided into synonyms and synonyms

Homomorphism is the most common form in British and American literature, and it is mainly realized by adjectives with double meanings before and after meaning [12]. The same phrases are mostly idiom-specific and, like Chinese proverbs, cannot be understood on the surface. For example, "American Dream" on the surface means "American Dream", but it is actually "in the United States, everyone can pursue the opportunity to realize wealth, freedom, and ideals."

2.2 Rhetorical Effects of Puns in British and American Literature

In the history of English and American literature, Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, O. Shaw Bernard Henry, George Carlin, Mark Twain and others like to use it in their work. Pun rhetoric forms a double context, creates and creates an atmosphere, and creates humorous, humorous, profound, sarcastic, and radical language effects to make readers associate.

(1) Expressing the emotions of the speaker

In some cases, puns can express a speaker's strong emotional tendencies and opinions, but this expression is implicit. The sounds of "Sole" and "Soul" are similar, forming a near-tone pun, used by Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*, revealing Sherlock's brutal idea of killing Antonio, and implicitly expressing his warm sympathy for Antonio And criticism of Sherlock. Another example is *Hamlet*. Hamlet was very angry when he learned that his father had died in the hands of his uncle, but there was no evidence that he would return. It can only be euphemistically expressed in "less than kind" language. The most common meaning of "kind" is "kindness and friendliness", which means three things here. First, it was shown that he and his uncle were not a kind of people, showing contempt for the uncle from the side; second, hiding the dissatisfaction and anger towards Uncle Hamlet, and suggesting the development of the next plot; third, shortly after the death of the uncle's father, It was unreasonable to give him, which showed that Hamlet was dissatisfied with the Queen.

(2) Reflect the author's views and values

As a writer, he often expresses his personal thoughts and values through his works. Chinese writers like to convey sad thoughts and stories, while Western writers are used to expressing directly. Of course, some writers like to express their emotions euphemistically by using rhetoric. The pun is lively, witty and interesting. They often have the effect of advancing the storyline, inspiring reading

interest, and resonating with readers. For example, in the solo play “Augustus Dose His Bit”, “engage” and “see” make up a pun, and Bernard Shaw uses it just right. In the text, when someone asks if he is “engaged”, he answers “see” (see), and when someone asks if he is free, he answers “see” (meeting). When asked if he was engaged, he used the puns “see”, “engaged”, and “see” as if they were pure, without any waste. It conceals the author’s sarcasm and attacks on the present false thoughts. If readers can understand the meaning of puns, then they must have a deeper understanding of this article.

2.3 Translation of Puns in British and American Literature

(1) Peer-to-peer translation

In English and American literature, any pun can be found in the translation. This requires finding a corresponding translation. For example, “They pray for you on Sunday, and they will prey on Monday. I pray for you today and I will have surgery on you tomorrow”. Among them, “pray” means “prayer” and “prey” means “predatory”. These two words form a kind of near-tone pun, which has an ironic effect.

(2) Free Translation

Some puns have specific meanings and cannot be translated word by word. They only give up the fun of the original puns, fully understand the meaning of the original, and then perform ideographic translation. For example: what is done is done, translated into a wooden boat. In addition, some words cannot be translated directly. For example, “and yokels looking up at the tingseled dancers and old rough tumblers” in Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair*. Translated to look at dancers in shiny clothes and puppets full of fat. Wei L’s translation is that people can understand the essence and the result of Tao only when they have no desire, and Mr. Gu believes that by observing “nothing”, one can see the subtlety of Tao, and by observing “yes” one can see the Tao Beginning and origin. Two different translation methods are related to the different understandings of the original text by the translator. Obviously, this power is not enough to understand the original text thoroughly.

3. Experiment

3.1 Experimental Methods

The research methods mainly used in this paper include literature research method, theoretical analysis method and statistical analysis method.

(1) Literature research method and theoretical analysis method

Review the relevant literature such as British and American literary works and their translations, sort out related research on British and American literary works and their translations, and prepare the data for the subsequent statistical analysis.

(2) Statistical analysis method

The relevant data of British and American literary works and their translations were analyzed to obtain statistical results.

3.2 Experimental Design

In order to investigate the practical application of the above methods in the translation of English and American literary works, and analyze the impact of different translation strategies on pun translation, this study randomly extracts ten chapters from each literary work, limiting the data statistics to the original text only Emerging puns with allusions. For some culturally exclusive items that did not accompany the background laughter after the appearance, the author did not include them in the research scope. This research first finds the puns in each work, examines the translation strategies applied by the translators at the corresponding positions in the translation, records them one by one, and separately counts the usage of each strategy, and enters them in the following tables. In addition, It also uses Excel software for statistical processing to form the final statistical results.

4. Discussion

4.1 Experimental Results and Analysis

According to the available data, we are not yet able to rank the translation strategies in the table according to their effects and frequency of use. However, it can be determined that regardless of the number of puns or the total number of source cultural allusions in the original text, Among the translation strategies used in the production of puns, literal translation is a method often used in translation and frequently used. The specific experimental results are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. The data are the results of the author's experimental arrangement.

Table 1. Experimental index data results

| | Hamlet | Jane Eyre | Old man and the sea | Wuthering Heights | total |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Peer literal translation | 30 | 14 | 22 | 50 | 116 |
| Free translation | 8 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 32 |

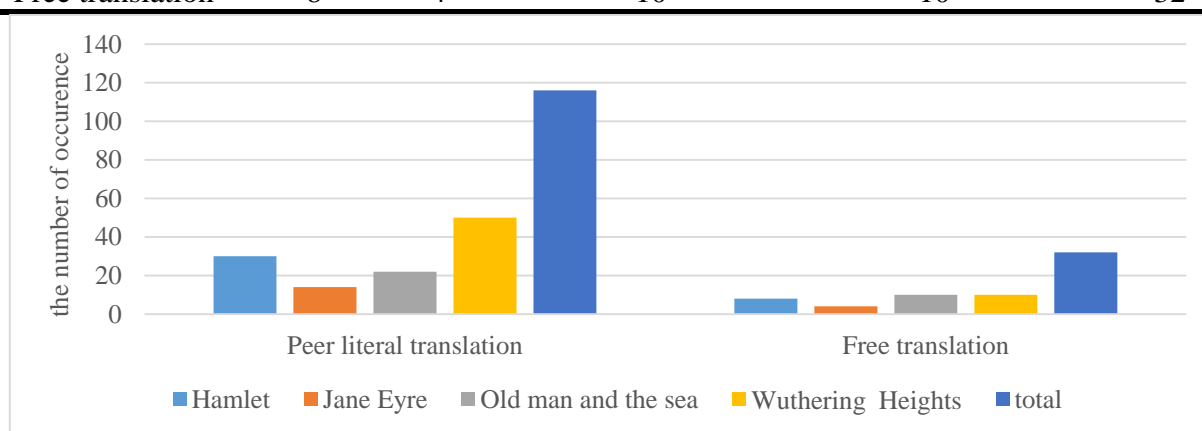


Figure 1. Comparison of experimental data of different translation strategies

4.2 Suggestions on Pun Translation of British and American Literary Works

(1) Combined with context

The translation of puns is multi-layered and multi-directional. It is necessary to give full consideration to various contextual factors and pay attention to the connotation of context. The expression is complete and correct. Puns play only an auxiliary role in homophonic puns, and their meaning is where the true meaning is expressed. The self-evident meaning of semantic puns, in the form of language, is most important to consider the relationship between the two parties. The translation of puns needs to be flexible. If the sound, shape, meaning and rhetoric to be conveyed in the original text cannot be expressed directly in the translation, the translation should be flexible to better convey the meaning to be expressed in the original text. When teaching, teachers must consider homonyms, word meanings, and special locales. They should grasp the characteristics of puns, analyze, compare and consider to clarify their original intention.

(2) Pursuit of functional equivalence

When translating puns, translators must reproduce rhetorical effects to the greatest extent and pursue functional equivalence. If there is no word in the source language that corresponds to the form and meaning of the pun, you should get rid of the constraints of the language form, pay attention to the influence of the language, and find the best balance between loyalty to the original author and to the original author. Target readers and pursue maximum functional equivalence.

(3) Proper creation and proper use

In order to really use the pun rhetoric technique correctly, you need to pay attention to the following points: 1) Puns cannot be used at will, so as to avoid obscure or even low-level speech. Use should be natural and appropriate. 2) Connotation should be concise and profound. It should not be far-fetched or strict avoid ambiguity. Two things related to puns or two aspects of things are not always equal. The meaning of the two levels it expresses is clear, and the focus of semantics is

often the latter. In short, puns must be used appropriately. Only in this way can we achieve the purpose of humor implicitly and indirectly, can we add glory to our conversations and articles, and can achieve effects that cannot be achieved in a single meaning.

5. Conclusion

The essence of puns in English and American literature is to use homophones, nearphones, and words and phrases of different semantics to create texts and languages. The purpose is to give them dual meanings in a specific context. One is literal meaning and the other is “meaning”. Usually “foreign words” are the focus of expression. It is an expression of the author’s values, an expression of the speaker’s thoughts and emotions, and a powerful way for the author to shape the role image. In many cases, unexpected effects can occur, such as humor, humor, irony, and attack. It makes the work more interesting and emotional, greatly enhances the vitality and attractiveness of the work, and enables the reader to read subconsciously.

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