

A Study of the 'Match' Model in Employing Chinese Four-Character Idioms in English into Chinese Translation ...

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ABSTRACT

In English into Chinese translation, source-language emphasis or target-language emphasis has been a heated topic of debate. The debate is only theoretical. Nord's (1997) two translation strategies can be used for reference. If translation is documentary, it tends to be source-language oriented. If translation is instrumental, it tends to be target-language oriented. In instrumental translation, fluency and accuracy are suggested to give priority to translators' consideration because translation is intercultural and cross-cultural. Although Nida's (1964) equivalence principle has been followed by many translators, as cited in Munday (2000, p. 44), Newmark (1981) distances himself from the full principle of equivalence effect since that effect is inoperant if the text is out of target-language (TL) space and time (Newmark 1981, p. 69). In employing Chinese four-character idioms in English into Chinese translation, because the form of a Chinese four-character idiom is fixed, it is often found that the match or mismatch in meaning for the source text (ST) greatly influences the quality of the target text (TT). Meaning is broken down into linguistic (synonymous, grammatical/syntactic), denotative (referential/intensive), connotative (emotive/extensive), pragmatic, and culture-loaded meanings according to the contexts. Apart from the theoretical debate of foreignizing or domesticating and the term 'equivalence effect', this study integrated from some translation theories focuses on match or mismatch in meaning between ST and TT by exemplifying the possible consequences from the employment of four-character Chinese idioms in English into Chinese translations. The consequences are classified into four categories: (I) A good match (a match in both meaning and the language feature), (II) A match (a match in meaning), (III) a partial match in meaning (four types), and (IV) mismatch in meaning, which were thoroughly investigated in the research. The results are as follows. It is suggested that the match model (including a good match and a match) be underscored. The first type of a partial match, under-translation, is suggested to be compensated by adding details or providing notes. The second type of a partial match, over-translation, which scarcely occurs in the study, is suggested to be modified by merging or deduction. The other problematic translations are tackled by using acceptable non-idiomatic renditions or other well-matched idioms. The research was attempted to help readers (to) have a penetrating insight of making proper employment of Chinese four-character idioms in English into Chinese translation. Key words: match, partial match, mismatch, under-translation, over-translation, overstatement, Chinese four-character idiom/idioms (CFCI), English to Chinese translation, (E-C translation)

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