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硕 士 学 位 论 文

关联理论视角下的译员能动性探究

Interpreter's Initiatives from the Perspective of Relevance Theory

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Abstract

The thesis is an initial attempt to discuss interpreter's initiatives from the perspective of Relevance Theory (RT). RT was first put forward by Sperber and Wilson in 1986. A few modifications have been made since then, making it more perfect and persuasive. RT is a pragmatics approach to explore communication as a process of search for optimal relevance with initiatives from communicators. Shared cognitive environment between them lays the foundation for communication. By providing each other with the most relevant utterances communicators ensure the achievement of utmost contextual effects with least processing efforts. Only when optimal relevance is established can communicative intentions be delivered.

Interpreting is a special kind of communication because language obstacles urge communicators to resort to the interpreter to guarantee optimal relevance. To successfully communicate intentions, the interpreter as a communicator bears more responsibilities and takes more initiatives compared with the other single language communicators. With three parties involved interpreting is divided into two ostensive-inferential processes. Whether or not optimal relevance is achieved in the previous process exerts direct influence on the latter one. Hence the interpreter is crucial and he/she must take all initiatives to facilitate communication.

Exploration on interpreter's role and subjectivity started only at the end of last century. Years of research reveals that interpreter's active role and initiatives are gaining increasing recognition against traditional negative impressions on interpreters. However research under the title "interpreter's initiatives" is rare. This thesis is an attempt in this field to define interpreter's initiatives, verify its significance and provide with approaches to improve it. Literature reviews of interpreter's subjectivity and roles are presented in chapter two. RT and interpreting under RT have been given detailed illustration in chapter three. Chapter four focuses on the significance of interpreter's initiatives in interpreting and chapter five offers ways to enhance

interpreter's initiatives.

This thesis is only a preliminary exploration of interpreter's initiatives from the perspective of RT. It is hoped that more related studies can be carried out in the future.

Key words: Relevance Theory; interpreting; interpreter's initiatives

摘 要

本文是从关联理论角度对口译过程中译员能动性的一次理论探索。关联理论由 Sperber 和 Wilson 于 1986 年首次提出，后来进行了进一步修订。关联理论从语用学的角度将交际视为一种交际者利用自身能动性寻求最佳关联的过程。交际赖以产生的基础是交际双方共同拥有的认知环境，在认知环境中交际双方通过为彼此建立具有最佳关联性的语境使得对方能够使用最少的处理努力获得最多的语境效果，从而获得交际意图，顺利完成交际。

口译是一种特殊的交际过程，交际双方同样通过创建最佳关联传达交际意图，但是碍于语言不通，只有借助译员才能推动这一进程。然而与普通单语交际者相比，译员在交际过程中承担着更大的责任，并利用了更多的能动性促成交际。译员的出现使得整个交际过程分成了两个明示-推理过程，每一个明示-推理过程都需要建立最佳关联。前一个过程中的最佳关联程度直接影响着后一过程中最佳关联的实现。如何积极有效的促成口译交际中最佳关联的实现，译员起着不可替代的作用，译员的能动性是整个口译过程顺利进行的基础也是保证口译质量的关键。

目前的口译研究中鲜有以"译员能动性"为题的研究，但是与译员能动性密切相关的"译员主体性"和"译员角色"历来颇受关注，因此本文首先从这两个方面进行了文献综述，阐释了二者与能动性之间的关系。之后，本文详细介绍了关联理论中的几个重要概念，包括"明示-推理过程"、"认知环境、语境、语境效果、处理努力"、"关联原则和最佳关联"，并将口译过程置于关联理论之下进行了分析。 接下来，本文详尽论证了译员能动性在口译过程中的重要作用。最后，从实践角度介绍了提高译员能动性的方式方法。

本文是对关联理论指导下的译员能动性的尝试性理论探索，补充了口译理论研究中这一方面的空白，同时也对口译教学、培训和评估提供了指导和借鉴意义。希望今后能有更多的相关研究完善这方面的论证。

关键词：关联理论 口译 译员能动性

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The practice of interpreting enjoys thousands of years of history, but professionalization of it started only after WWⅡ. Evolution of its definition reveals a growing positive attitude towards interpreting from being merely a lexical and syntactical equivalence practice to a kind of communication facilitated by the interpreter. Traditionally, interpreter is regarded as a "machine", "conduit" or "bridge" and is required not to involve in communication process except for transforming one langue into another. As time goes on, this kind of attitude has changed greatly. Today, interpreter is thought to be an active participant who facilitates the process of communication. A growing number of studies have been conducted in this perspective over recent years. Despite widespread discussions on interpreter's role and subjectivity, there is rare study on the subject of initiatives. This thesis will focus on argumentation of the significance and ways of improvement of interpreter's initiatives at length from the perspective of RT.

1.1 Definition of Interpreter's Initiatives

Few studies have been conducted under the theme "Interpreter's Initiatives" by now, so there is no existing definition to refer to and thus the necessity to clarify the concept first. In the Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary, explanation of "Initiative" is: the ability to decide and act on your own without waiting for somebody to tell you what to do. In this sense, an interpreter's initiatives are an interpreter's ability to decide and act on his/her own without waiting for somebody to tell him/her what to do in interpreting process. That is to say, interpreter's initiatives are his/her ability to spontaneously and actively interpret information.

1.2 Relations among Interpreter's Subjectivity, Subjectivity Consciousness, Roles and Initiatives

Quite a lot of research has been done on interpreters with focus on "interpreter's role", "interpreter's subjectivity consciousness" and "interpreter's subjectivity". Initiatives are closely related with these concepts and as a matter of fact it is a subset of them. According to Ren Wen (2010), the core of people's subjectivity includes practical ability and creativity. It has two attributes, namely initiatives and passivity. Subjectivity consciousness is people's awareness of their subjectivity. In interpreting, it means the interpreter has the awareness to creatively deal with information. Research on interpreter's role belongs to that on subjectivity and subjectivity consciousness. It equals to the study of visibility and invisibility under the two subjects. With above explanation the author attempts to categorize interpreter's initiatives under the other three, which can be regarded as an active and visible role, a kind of subjectivity and subjectivity consciousness. Based on this clarification, this thesis is actually a specific exploration of interpreter's visible role—initiatives throughout interpreting process.

1.3 Reasons for Conducting the Present Study

A lack of study on interpreter's initiatives gives the author an opportunity to tap into this subject. Birth of RT and a wide range of applications of it to explain interpreting phenomena offer the author another chance to combine study of interpreter's initiatives with RT. Whether or not giving full play to interpreter's initiatives is directly related with interpreting quality due to the fact that interpreter takes a crucial part in communicating information and intentions. Generally speaking, the more initiatives, the better interpreting quality. Interpreter's initiatives are reflected throughout interpreting process. Study of it involves tremendous efforts in analyzing the whole process, which will undoubtedly offer guidance to interpreting teaching, training and evaluation.