



COMPREHENSION AND EXPRESSION IN TRANSLATION



Comprehension and expression are two important aspects and also two main phases in translation. They are correlative and complementary when you translate the source text into target text accurately and fluently.

Comprehension is the premise for expression; only accurate comprehension may result in right expression in the language conversion. Under accurate comprehension, the expression becomes the key or foundation to deliver excellent translation.

How to accurately comprehend the words, sentences, or paragraphs? First of all, you should have solid knowledge about the source language, which means you should master basic grammar of this language. But that is not enough, you have to learn about background and specialized vocabulary of relative areas. Let us just see two examples.

1. Richard could easily destroy her personal property to punish her for walking out on him.
2. To add another one of these properties you must recompile the resource class.

In sentence 1, the “property” means all the things owned, we can translate it as “财产”, but in sentence 2, if we translate “property” as “属性”, it means that we do not grasp the meaning of the specialized vocabulary

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in specific areas.

The “property” means attribute or characteristic of an object that is used to define its appearance, state or value in IT industry, so we can translate it as “属性”. From these instances, we can learn that different areas have different specialized vocabulary.

So to comprehend the source accurately, we should make efforts in not only the basic grammar, but also specialized knowledge of particular areas.

If we have no difficulty in comprehending the source text, does that mean we can do translation well? The answer is absolutely negative. As we know, two different languages differ in many aspects, such as culture, background and expression.

When we translate one language to another language, we must master the different expression habits adopted in these two languages. Then we should follow the basic habits to give appropriate target text. That is the basic rule. Besides this, we have to understand different style of the source text.

Some text is very colloquial, if you translate it too formalized, the translation cannot be good even if you translate every word, sentence or paragraph accurately. Similarly, if the source text is formal, but you give very colloquial translation, the result is also dissatisfactory.

Therefore, to give accurate and authentic translation for the source, your expression should avoid grammatical mistakes, unidiomatic phenomena, fluency problems, wrong styles, etc.

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