CONTRASTIVE STUDIES OF ENGLISH AND CHINESE & E-C TRANSLATION

Understanding the linguistic thinking of both Chinese and English is a good way to promote language comprehension, avoid Chinglish and improve translating ability. Today we are talking about Chinese and English sentence structure comparison and their translation countermeasures.

Generally speaking, English focuses on hypotaxis while Chinese focuses on parataxis. More specifically, English sentences connect words and subordinate clauses through various form means, such as relatives, conjunctions, prepositions and so on, pay attention to overt cohesion, sentences forms and structural integrity.

Chinese joins words and makes sentences through the inherent syntaxis of meaning, no restricted morphological change, no relative pronouns, relative adverbs, even uses few prepositions.

Let’s talk it in detail from several areas.

**Word order**

There two kinds of word orders – highlight order and natural order. English is of both orders, but prefer to state the important information at the beginning of the sentences, so called highlight order. And Chinese is natural order. For this reason, readjusting the word order becomes an
important translation skill. e.g.

Original: There are many wonderful stories to tell about the places I visited and the people I met.

Translation: 我访问了一些地方，遇到了不少人，要谈起这些，我有许多奇妙的故事要讲。

Tips: translate the sentence in the order they occurred, conforming to Chinese expressions.

Original: It would be appreciated if samples and brochure could be soon forwarded.

Translation: 如蒙早日寄来样品或产品册，将不甚感激。

Tips: Narration before declaration, reasons before results, and background before focus in Chinese.

**Solid structure and plane structure**

In English, there are numerous prepositions, conjunctions, and even relational words, participles and gerunds which won’t appear in Chinese, these words can connect principal clause and subordinate clauses, then forming a solid structure features complicated levels. It is one of the reasons why there lots of long sentences in English. But Chinese states flatly, usually no centre. How to convert solid structure to plane structure, see the examples below:

Original: Each of the broadcasting companies is linked to approximately 200 affiliated stations to which it provides major entertainment programs which they could not produce it if they were obliged on local resources.

Translation: 每个广播公司都与大约200个附属广播站有联系，由这些公司向广播站提供主要娱乐性节目，这些节目要靠各站就
Compact and Diaspora

English pays attention to integrity and standard of structure, many sentences are of complicate structure. The main reason is that there are many means to connect all kinds of components in English. By contrast, the uniform of core component is not required in Chinese sentences, some of the components are hidden, result in a diaspora structure.

Nominalization is one of the most important ways to make English sentences compact, plenty of noun phrases are basically the concentrations of sentences, when translate to Chinese, this kind of concentration should be reflected by a sentence, so called turn phrases into clauses. For example:

Original: His weariness and increasing heat determined him to sit down in the first convenient shade.

Translation: 他疲惫不堪,而且天气也越来越热,于是,他下决心,一碰到舒适的阴凉处就坐下来休息。

English sentences put attention on subordinate, forming a reiteration structure, therefore disconnecting the structure, one sentence one issue, becomes another way to convert compact to diaspora. For example:

Original: I sincerely hope that your congratulations will be matched by your collective endeavour to seek a just and practical solution to the problem which has bedeviled the United Nations for so many years.

Translation 1: 我们诚恳地希望在你们的祝贺之后将有与之相应的为寻求一个解决多年困扰着联合国的问题的公正而实际的办法的共同努力。

Translation 2:
Translation 2: 我们诚恳地希望，你们在表示祝贺之后，能作出相应的共同努力，以便寻求一个公正的实际可行的办法，来解决这多年来一直困扰着联合国的问题。

Comment: Obviously, translation 2 satisfies Chinese expression habits better.

reference:《英汉语言比较与翻译》, 杨丰宁 编著