

ON THE EMOTIONAL COLORING OF WORDS AND PHRASES (I)

One of the most important reasons that the machine translation cannot compare to the manpower's is that the machine cannot identify the concrete emotional coloring of words in context. In other words, a machine cannot understand the emotional feelings of a narrator's meaning. This is so called the emotional coloring of words.

When expressing different feelings, we select different words. Generally, words are classified into three categories in terms of their emotional coloring, which is the commendatory term, the derogatory term and the neutral term. The commendatory term is often laudatory or complimentary words, while the derogatory term is often expressing critical or disparaging meanings and the neutral term express no definite feelings, neither laudatory nor critical.

Commendatory term: beautiful, great, valuable, mercy, clever, cute, ingenious, wise, talent, brave, courageous, valiant, gallant, strong, firm, rich, devotion, loyalty, faith, faithfulness, fidelity, allegiance, honesty...

Derogatory term: sly, crafty, cunning, tricky, slippery, obstinate, stubborn, arrogance, immorality, hypocrisy, dishonesty, hypocritical, dishonest, deception, fraud, trickery, cheat, lie, betrayal, humbug, swindle, evil, nuisance...

Neutral term: fast, career, slow, tall, hard, flower, mild, weak, American, soft, wide, high, long, free, late, deep, near, nice, thin, computer...

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But, more often, a word cannot be simply classified into a certain category. Take the word “funny” as an example.

Phrase:

a funny black hat

a funny story

a funny fox

Sentence:

He has funny habit of blinking when talking with others.

You’ll be sorry if you try something funny in class.

This is something funny about the matter.

The same word can act as three different characters. The funny in the phrase “a funny story” and the sentence “He has funny habit of blinking when talking with others”,arousing or provoking laughter arousing or provoking laughteris a commendatory word. While, it in the phrase “a funny fox” and the sentence “You’ll be sorry if you try something funny in class.” expresses a derogatory meaning. And, in the phrase “a funny black hat” and the sentence “This is something funny about the matter”, it is a neutral word.

(to be continued)

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