

Sports News Translation from the Perspective of Communicative Translation Theory—Cases Study of F1 News

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Abstract

In recent years, sports in China, especially motorsports, a relatively new field for the country, has developed vigorously and has made some positive achievements. From the introduction of Formula One in Shanghai in 2004 to the signing of the first Chinese Formula One driver Zhou Guanyu with the Alfa Romeo Formula One team in 2021, all reflect the rapid development of Chinese motorsports. The relevant English news is an important way for domestic fans to timely understand the development and trend the sports events, and the accurate and authentic translation of English news reports plays an important role in this. How to achieve accurate translation and appropriately convey the relevant content is the priority. From the perspective of communicative translation theory, this paper mainly studies the appropriate methods of sports news translation by analyzing the high-quality English-Chinese parallel texts of F1 news in different contexts and strives to translate the news content and its connotation accurately and appropriately to facilitate readers' reading and understanding to the greatest extent, finally providing some references for accurate and authentic sports translation and some ideas for the smooth development of further studies on sports news translation.

Keywords

F1 News, News Translation, Communicative Translation Theory

1. Introduction

In China, a big sports country, motorsports is a special sports type. Its development level also embodies the development of a national automobile industry and automobile culture. The development of Chinese motorsports is relatively late.

But it is fast and high-quality, and the development trend is getting more mature. In 2004, Shanghai hosted the first Formula One Chinese Grand Prix, which was also the first time China hosted three of the world's top sporting events. In 2022, Zhou Guanyu began his F1 career with the Alfa Romeo F1 team, becoming China's first official F1 driver. The development of the automobile industry and the accumulation of automobile culture have jointly promoted the development of Chinese motorsports and racing culture to a new historical height. Sports have the power to guide people to surpass themselves and improve themselves, so sports news has the special effect of stimulating positive energy and curing social diseases. The development of the sports news industry in European and American countries is relatively perfect, but there are many problems and deficiencies in the transmission of news reports about motorsports events in China. News translation is one of these prominent problems. In recent years, domestic research on news translation is increasing gradually, and the content of the research is gradually becoming perfect. Many scholars tend to use various translation strategies and theories to study the translation of news content, and some positive results have been achieved in sports news translation studies in such fields as NBA and World Cup. However, for most researchers engaged in sports news translation, news content specific to the field of motorsports is still less and relatively unfamiliar, and there are still some deficiencies and problems such as misunderstanding of context and lack of relevant background knowledge. Therefore, there is still room for improvement in translation studies in specific fields. This paper hopes to further verify and enrich relevant theories based on sports news translation practice, hoping to further elaborate Newmark's communicative translation theory from a new perspective and expand the study of news translation in specific fields. The research process of English sports news translation is also the process of foreign news dissemination in China. Therefore, the significance of the research of F1 news translation is to deliver more valuable news content in the field of motorsports to the vast number of readers and motorsports fans and accelerate the popularization and dissemination of motorsports and related knowledge more accurately and perfectly in China. The news text and translated text in this paper are selected from Motorsport.com news, and it is also the basis of the case study. The content of the report is the latest news, and most of these news writers are famous media and experts in the field of motorsports, which fundamentally ensures that professional news is of high quality. From the perspective of communicative translation theory, this paper analyzes multiple groups of different news source texts and translated texts, conducts comparative studies, explores the internal in-depth links between them and whether they are in line with the basic content of communicative translation theory, and considers the feasibility suggestions from the perspective of communicative translation theory (Wu & Dong, 2025). This paper intends to use the comparative research method to carry out comparative research on multiple groups of different original news texts and translations, to find out the similarities and differences between them, and then explore their universal

and special laws. In the final stage of this paper, the method of induction and summary will be proposed to summarize the research results of the whole paper and put forward relevant meaningful suggestions.

2. Communicative Translation Theory and Sports News Translation

2.1. Communicative Translation Theory

Research on Newmark's translation theory abroad began relatively early. As one of the representatives in the field of translation in the 20th century, Newmark's translation theory, especially the concepts of semantic translation and communicative translation, have had a profound influence on the translation academic community (Sun, 2019). Newmark opposed overemphasizing the social value of language and instead emphasized its communicative function, thus forming the viewpoint of "communicative translation". Influenced by Chomsky, Newmark developed the concept of "semantic translation". The research on Newmark's translation theory in China started relatively late. However, with the continuous development of the translation discipline in recent years, the study of Newmark's theory has gradually deepened. China's research indicates that Newmark's semantic translation and communicative translation strategies also have guiding significance in Chinese translation practice. Especially when dealing with texts with specific functions and purposes, the application of communicative translation strategies helps to achieve the expected effect of translation.

Chen & Zhang (2008) pointed out that Newmark believes that translation theory originates from comparative linguistics, and in the field of linguistics, mainly involves semantics. All the questions of semantics are related to translation theory. At the same time, Newmark believes that translation is not only a science but also an art and a skill. For different types of language texts, translators need to adopt different translation methods and try to make the translated effect on the target readers should be as much as the original effect on the original readers. Communication only means that the original message will be sent in its equivalent context to the target receptor (Jiang, 2018). Similarly, the main role of translators is to send the message across without any form of distortion or emphasis. It is delivering the genuine context of the message to the language that the active receptor understands.

Through translation, cultures meet the cultural other, redefine themselves, and are mutually enriched. Communicative translation tries to produce an effect on the readers of the target text, which should be as close as possible to that of the original text. It pays attention to the understanding and reaction of the receiver, that is, the effect of information transmission (Cao, 2008). Therefore, communicative translation requires the translator to reorganize the language structure to make the translation authentic and fluent. The key to communicative translation is to convey information so that the reader can think, feel, and act. It gives full play to the function of language to convey information. Han (2021) pointed out

that communicative translation is a skill that plays the function of language to convey information and produce an effect. It takes paragraph as the unit of translation and tends to under-translate, that is, to use all-encompassing generalities when it comes to difficult words. Its translation is generally superior to the original because it is effective, concise, and properly polished. If the translator wants to convey the information of the original text and give full play to the function of the information to convey the information and produce the effect, it is necessary to fully arouse the reader's thinking, feeling, and action, which is the key of communicative translation. Therefore, translators should make the source language submit to the target language and the target language culture, pay attention to the response of the target language readers, and express the obscure points in translation clearly.

Generally speaking, the works translated by communicative translation theory appear more fluent, concise, and idiomatic, which is suitable for a particular register. However, it is easy to lack translation, mainly because the translation focuses on the expression of the spirit and ignores the equivalence of words and phrases between the translation and the original. Although communicative translation theory emphasizes the understanding and response of readers to make the target text more fluent and smooth, which is more in line with the language habits of the target text, it does not mean that the translator can deviate from the original text. The communicative translation is also restricted by the content, form, structure, and words of the original text, but it is better at exerting the linguistic expression function of the target text.

2.2. Features of English Sports News

News reports can be seen everywhere in daily life, and the research on sports news is increasing. Compared with other languages, English news reports are more popular and influential. Sports news is an important part of English news. Accuracy, conciseness, and rapidity are the basic characteristics that sports news should possess. Among them, sports news has its unique style and features, which are as follows:

The first part is the lexical characteristic. Li (2012) pointed out that understanding sports terminologies is the first step to understanding news. Compared with terms in other fields, the most obvious feature of terms in English sports news is their comprehensibility. Because almost any sport wants to generate more interest to expand its influence and market value, sports terms are less "technical" and easier to understand than technical or economic terms. She also pointed out that the tension and excitement of sports competitions are more likely to arouse people's enthusiasm and inspiration. English sports news is very good at creating and using new words. The use of these new words has greatly increased the vividness and attraction of sports news. In addition, the wide use of nicknames is a unique and interesting stylistic feature in English sports news. Besides the official names, nicknames are generally accepted by sports news practitioners and sports audi-

ences. The use of nicknames in sports news can make the article more vivid, in addition to making it closer to the readers.

The second part is about syntactic features. Sports news discourse is a very informative type of discourse, and to maintain the continuity and compactness of information, long sentences such as compound sentences or parallel sentences are often used in the reports (Zhou, 2013). Complex sentences have a variety of sentence types, and complex sentences such as parallelism, subordination, congruence, and conjunction are often found in the news. News stories are usually limited by space, but sports stories, in particular, are (Liu, 2010). Therefore, it must be concise. Therefore, journalists often use direct quotes to summarize the most important parts of a story, which is true and concise. Besides, to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, news reports usually use the speaker's direct quotation to convey the truest information to readers.

The third part is semantic characteristics. One of the semantic features of English sports news is the use of rhetoric (Liu, 2010). The rational use of rhetoric can make the language more vivid, easy to understand, and attractive. This method is often used in English sports news. Semantic variation can be realized with rhetorical tools, which can make the language vivid and easy to understand. Synecdoche and metonymy are the two most commonly used tools in this process. Synecdoche is a part for the whole or a whole for the part. Especially in news headlines, it is common to see the use of the country to refer to a group of athletes in a country, because a country's sports team is often seen as the representative and symbol of the country. Metonymy refers to a figure of speech in which two things are closely related and one is used to refer to the other (Li, 2012). In English sports news, metonymy is often used about a certain sport, a certain player, or a certain feature of a certain sports team. In addition, professional vocabulary, phrases, and syntactic structures are very common in English sports news. Therefore, sports news is more difficult to read than other news. In this case, it is essential for the reader to fully understand the background to get the correct semantics of the news.

2.3. Sports News Translation

Over the course of nearly 20 years, relevant research on sports translation in China has achieved certain results. The main research topics and paradigms have focused on the following aspects: First, the construction of the discipline of sports English teaching and translation, as well as the cultivation of talents. Second, the process and characteristics of sports translation, as well as the translation process and techniques of sports texts. This type of research focuses on analyzing the language features of sports texts and exploring strategies and methods suitable for sports translation. Third, the application of sports translation in specific fields or scenarios. Usually, specific sports events or competitions are selected as the research objects, and the problems and solutions in the practical application of sports translation are discussed. Looking globally, in recent years, some research results on sports translation have also emerged. However, as English is a universal language,

the demand for sports-related translations in English-speaking countries is relatively low. Therefore, most of the related research comes from non-English-speaking countries (Huo, Li, & Hua, 2024).

Based on the basic content and characteristics of communicative translation theory, it is more appropriate to choose communicative translation theory as the theoretical guidance in the practice of sports news translation (Zhang, 2020). Different literary styles have different characteristics, and as mentioned in the previous chapter of this paper, sports news also has its basic characteristics. The application of communicative translation theory can make the translation more reasonable and reflect the characteristics of sports news (Zhang, 2019). Just like other sports events such as the NBA and the World Cup, F1 news has its unique characteristics, and these characteristics are suited to communicative translation theory.

According to the theory of communicative translation, on the one hand, translation needs to faithfully convey the main information contained in the original text. On the other hand, due to the differences between English and Chinese languages and cultures, translation needs to achieve the purpose of communication. The focus of news translation is to convey the main information to the target audience, rather than copy the original text (Zhang, 2022). Zhang (2022) also pointed out that word is the smallest language unit. In the process of translation, whether the target text can accurately convey the information of the original text largely depends on the word translation. However, due to differences in expression habits and ways of thinking, Chinese news and English news are quite different in many aspects. Therefore, in the process of translating long English sentences, these differences should be properly dealt with to make the content easier for readers to understand. The translation of sports news between English and Chinese is a challenging task, in which cultural factors play a crucial role (Ma, 2024).

2.4. F1 News Translation Under Communicative Translation Theory

Back to the text F1 news to be analyzed, this paper will use the theory of communicative translation to analyze its translated text. The general framework is as follows: whether the important task of the translation is to spread information, whether it achieves the purpose of communicating with the target language audience, and whether it avoids the obscurity of the translation.

Firstly, from the perspective of vocabulary, whether the translation of terms in the target text is correct and unified, and whether the translation of cultural words in the vocabulary reflects the translator's recognition and respect for the culture of the source language because the correct translation of words can reflect the authority of the target text.

Secondly, at the syntactic level, whether the translation transforms the grammar of the original text without changing the original meaning, whether adjusts the logical structure of the original text into a form more acceptable to the target lan-

guage group, and whether it makes it easier for readers to understand and accept the original text.

Finally, at the level of style, whether the translation has divided the text types and focused on the target language of such informational texts, and whether it has elaborated the rhetoric in the text.

3. Case Analyses

3.1. Lexical Level

In the lexical aspect, there are a lot of jargon and expressions used by people engaging in F1 circles, which are hard to deal with for translators (Ouyang, 2015). Guessabi (2021) have mentioned that some news is full of culturally loaded words and strange terms. If these expressions cannot be translated properly, that will be difficult for readers to get understand them. Among those professional words, terminologies, abbreviations, and neologisms are more significant.

ST1: Red Bull and Aston Martin have been found guilty of breaching last year's Formula 1 cost cap rules, as the FIA finally announced the outcome of its financial audit on Monday.

TT1: 国际汽联公布 2021 年“预算帽”财务审计结果, 确认红牛和阿斯顿·马丁违反财政规则。

Some common words have special sports meanings in the field of professional sports events. In this case, the “cost cap” is a financial rule first introduced in Formula One for the 2021 season to reduce the cost of the sport and create a more level playing field for teams. The cost cap sets the maximum amount teams are allowed to spend each season and is subject to FIA monitoring. Term translation must play a communicative function. According to Newmark's text types, professional terms are objective, not personal, and do not contain the function of expression. Their most important task is to convey information, so it is necessary to find professional expressions corresponding to the source language in the target language. Therefore, the translation of the cost cap into “预算帽” here can accurately convey information and express professionalism. There are a lot of terms in F1, and the translation requirements for terms are usually strict because the terms are characterized by professionalism, unity, singularity, systematization, and stability.

ST2: “Australian GP buzz will tell me a lot about F1 comeback.”

TT2: “澳大利亚大奖赛的氛围将告诉我是否想回归 F1。”

Sports news reports have a very high requirement for timeliness, and the reason why abbreviations are so widely used in news reports is that they are very concise and easy to use. Although short in structure, it is highly culturally loaded. In this case, “GP” is one of the most common abbreviations in Formula One. It is called the “Grand Prix”. The word comes from French and means a big prize. Because in the early days of horse racing, the champion could get a big prize. France is an important birthplace of motor racing in Europe, so the Grand Prix is used in motor racing. In Formula One, every race is set up with large prize money, so it is

translated as “大奖赛”. In this way, the connotation of the abbreviation can be fully explained, the purpose of communicating with ordinary audiences and readers can be achieved, and the role of communication can be fully played.

ST3: An FIA medical report that warns about the risks of brain damage to drivers from excessive porpoising proves rule changes are needed for next year, says Mercedes boss Toto Wolff.

TT3: 梅赛德斯领队托托·沃尔夫表示一项 FIA 医疗报告发出警告, 过度的海豚跳会给车手带来脑损伤风险, 证明需要对明年的规则进行修改。

New words often come into being with the constant development of sports. They can be new words or phrases or new meanings derived from old words or phrases, and the meaning of new words is often subject to a specific domain. In this case, “porpoising” is the hottest word in Formula One since the ground effect era began in 2022. For the 2022 season, F1 reintroduced ground effect into the new regulations. As a result, the change in the way the car gains downforce causes the bottom of the car to bounce repeatedly after hitting the ground at high speeds, much like a dolphin repeatedly leaping out of the sea. Therefore, it is translated as “海豚跳”, which vividly shows the dynamic characteristics of this phenomenon. And according to the principle of communicative translation, the translation of new words should be combined with the context, rather than just the literal meaning. This translation can achieve the expression effect corresponding to the original text in the readers of the source language, standardized and accurate.

3.2. Syntactic Level

In terms of syntax, long complex sentences and modifiers are the two most important parts, which are common in Formula One news (Wang, 2014). For the translation of long and complex sentences, attention should be paid to the consistent transmission of the information contained in the news while emphasizing the characteristics of accuracy, timeliness, and conciseness. Modifiers, in turn, contain different forms that often need to be rearranged in translation.

ST4: A push by the FIA to change the 2023 technical regulations and lift floor edges by 25mm to help eliminate car bouncing has not gone down well with a majority of teams, who fear it forces an unnecessary and expensive redesign of their new car plans.

TT4: FIA 正在推动修改 2023 年技术规则, 要把底板边缘提高 25 毫米来帮助解决赛车弹跳问题。不过, 这一提议没有受到大多数车队的欢迎, 他们担心这将迫使车队重新设计赛车, 而此举既没有必要又花费巨大。

The language of English is characterized by the use of conjunctions, which is the cause of long and complex sentences. This is quite different from the grammatical structure of Chinese. In this case, the sentence is very long and complex, and there are a lot of meanings in the sentence. Grammatically, this sentence uses many clauses and infinitives, which are intertwined. Translating the source text directly into the target text is messy and illogical, which makes reading more difficult. Therefore, in line with the principle of communicative translation and con-

sidering the linguistic characteristics of the target text, the target text divides the source text into two sentences, reorganizes the word order and adjusts the structure. This makes the final translation reasonably structured and logical.

ST5: Aston Martin Formula 1 driver Lance Stroll says Fernando Alonso's pushy nature will be a boost to both him and the squad this year.

TT5: 阿斯顿·马丁 F1 车手兰斯·斯特罗尔表示, 今年的队友费尔南多·阿隆索咄咄逼人的性格, 对他和车队都是一种促进。

Modifiers are as common in Formula One news as they are in any other text. In this case, the modifier is relatively simple, an adjective, but the translation of the modifier is not simple. The word "pushy" is used in this sentence to describe a person's personality. The person, in this case, is F1 driver Fernando Alonso. He was a very funny man with a straight personality and a good sense of humor. When communicating with the team and his teammates, he always speaks out if there are problems and mistakes. Pushy usually means aggressive. And because he is a Spaniard who speaks English with a strong emotional tone and accent. For this reason, the word is translated as "咄咄逼人". According to the communicative translation theory, the context of the source language determines the translator's understanding of the original text, and the translated text context is held by the translator. The understanding determines the reader's understanding of the translated text. Therefore, whether the translation of modifiers can accurately restore the context is the key point. This translation is not only humorous but also fully reflects the driver's characteristics. At the same time, it also reflects the principle of communication.

3.3. Stylistic Level

Style plays a very important role in translation, which has aroused wide attention in the translation field. As a special writing style, sports news has its unique stylistic characteristics. Among them, metaphor and colloquial expression are the most obvious. Translator can preserve the original image in the translated text, keep the original metaphor, replace the original image with a common one, and render the metaphor using a figurative comparison while preserving the original image and notion explication, ignore the notion explication of the metaphor, or remove the image (Wang, 2008).

ST6: It has become part of our DNA, but the silver color of the Silver Arrows is as much our DNA, it's our history.

TT6: 它已经成为我们 DNA 的一部分, 但赛车上的银色也是我们的 DNA, 是我们的历史。

Rhetoric can polish an article, and the same applies to sports journalism. As in other texts, the use of rhetoric is common in Formula One news, especially metaphors, and metonymies. In this case, this is a classic example of metonymy. As the main color of racing car livery, Silver has been used throughout the history of Mercedes Benz racing sports. Because of its great achievements in F1, Mercedes Benz racing cars are usually called Silver Arrow. There is also a Chinese translation of "银箭", but for those who don't know the sport, the word may be confusing.

Therefore, the modification of the source text to translate it into “赛车” is more specific and conducive to understanding, which reflects the principle of communicative translation.

ST7: “This season it’s still trying to finish high for Alfa Romeo, and there are going be very special events at tracks like Monza for us.”

TT7: “本赛季，我们依然希望能给阿尔法·罗密欧拿到好成绩，并且在蒙扎这样的赛道上会安排一些非常特别的活动。”

Colloquial expression is very common in sports news reports. The reason is that direct quotation is widely used. In addition, the oral expression itself has the advantage of being concise and vivid is also an important reason. In this case, the sentence is a direct quote from an interview with Chinese driver Zhou Guanyu. There is an obvious colloquial expression for this: “Finish high”. A literal translation would inevitably result in the reader of the target text having difficulty understanding the meaning. According to communicative translation theory, the adjustment of direct quotes in sports news cannot change the intrinsic meaning of the original text or distort the value judgment of the original quote. Both of these words are simple words, but only with a full understanding of the context and the meaning behind them can the meaning be accurately conveyed, and readers can have the reading experience of the readers of the source text. In Formula One, “finish” usually means that a driver drives all the race laps in every race; And “high” usually means a high ranking as a result. So “finish high” refers to a driver who finishes the race and gets a high ranking. What the phrase is expressed in the sentence is a kind of wish, so combined with the Chinese language habit, the translation of “拿到好成绩” is very reasonable.

4. Conclusion

Based on communicative translation theory, this paper has studied F1 news translation. F1 news has something in common with other sports news, but F1 news is not limited to a single style. Translating Formula One news is not easy. It is not enough to be interested in F1 news translation and master some basic translation methods. From the case in this paper, F1 news translation should start from the understanding of racing terms, term abbreviations, oral expressions, rhetorical devices, long and difficult sentence analysis, and other aspects. It also reflects the rigor and professionalism of sports news translation.

In the process of case analysis, the author found that communicative translation theory is very suitable for sports news translation. In the translation of sports news, communicative translation theory can be used as a guide to a large extent (Li, 2014). Words are the smallest linguistic units, and in the translation process, whether the translation can accurately convey the information of the original text depends largely on the translation of words. However, all words in a sentence are influenced by the specific language environment and cultural background at that time. Therefore, in the translation process, the translator should determine the true meaning of the words according to the specific cultural and linguistic envi-

ronment. The sentence structure should be adjusted when translating sentences. In this way, the translation can become smooth, natural, and easy to understand. For readers, the translation is easier to understand and accept, and the purpose of communication has been achieved. Likewise, communicative translation provides good guidance when translating texts involving rhetorical and oral expressions.

Besides, there is a lot of cultural content in Formula One news. English and Chinese these two different languages have their cultural differences, so cultural communication and exchange should be strengthened. Especially for translators engaged in relevant work, it is more important to take the initiative to explore the different cultures behind the text, because translation is also a way of communication between different civilizations. In the end, translation is telling the story of another culture.

5. Discussion

F1 news combines professional expertise with mass communication attributes, requiring translators to strike a balance between ensuring technical accuracy and achieving reader accessibility. Case studies demonstrate that through sentence restructuring, rhetorical adaptation, and colloquialization, translators can faithfully convey specialized information while aligning with Chinese readers' cognitive habits. This dynamic equilibrium embodies the core value of communicative translation theory.

Due to the limitation of the length of the paper, only a limited number of cases are selected for analysis in this paper, and there is room for improvement in the quality of a small part of the translation contained in the cases. Therefore, the cases in this paper cannot involve all aspects of F1 news translation, and it is of limited help to those engaged in related work. For those who are interested in F1 news translation, there is more to explore. In addition, although this paper is guided by communicative translation theory, some contents and opinions in this paper may not be objective due to the limitations of the author's ability and relevant professional knowledge.

Future research incorporating broader bilingual corpora of sports events could systematically validate the applicability boundaries and adaptation strategies of communicative translation theory across diverse texts and media styles. Simultaneously, by collecting feedback from different reader groups—such as professional sports journalists and general audiences—on translated content, theoretical applications can be linked to real-world communication outcomes. This approach provides objective grounds for selecting translation strategies, thereby enhancing the research's universality and practical guidance value.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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