Features of French Language in Its Usages from the Perspective of Korean-French Translation Teaching

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Abstract: There are many cases in Korean-French translation when the equivalents are not available in French and even when there are, the mechanical translation is not possible because of the difference in their usages. This paper aims to analyse the features of French languaguage in its usages from the perspective of word combination and composition of statements.

Keywords: Korean-French Translation Lessons, Foreign Language Study, Comparison of Both Languages, Teaching Korean-French Translation

1. Introduction

As a lecturer of French language, the author takes it as the topic of research mainly for Korean students of French as foreign language and other foreign learners interested in Korean language. This research is designed to give a fresh light to particularities of French as a target language through its comparison with Korean. The formulation of utterance in any language tends to reflect the structure and usage of the language in question. The language beginners would benefit enormously from the bilingual comparisons between languages. The author in this paper presents some effective methods for better acquiring Korean-French translation skills through clarifying several features in utterances and language usage of French as compared with Korean.

2. Literature Review

Translation is an essential subject for foreign language majors and one of the special subjects which is taught at a high level after acquiring the knowledge of the basic subjects such as intensive reading, grammar and speaking. Translation is one of the means of learning a foreign language and constitutes a mode, way and contents of foreign language study.

“Translation is not the transcoding of words or sentences from one language to another, but a complex form of action, whereby someone provides information on a source language text in a new situation and under changed functional, cultural, and linguistic conditions, preserving formal aspects as closely as possible.” (Snell-Hornby, 1989, p. 152)

Translation, which is a process of transferring the thinking based on a certain language into that based on another language, is a high-rank mental work and translation skill is comparatively difficult to acquire and is formed after other skills. It is because there are many cases in Korean-French translation when the equivalents are not available in French and even when there are, the mechanical translation is not possible because of the difference in their usages.

For example, French has a tendency of preferring the analytic forms to perform the same syntactical function and unlike Korean it uses the structure of perceptive verb sentence which describes the linguistic scene from the perspective of a third person as well as the personal subject sentence structure.

Of course the same sentence can be translated in many ways and it is impossible to systemize and teach them all. However, in my experience, the high-level translation requires a lot of practice; however, more effectively the theoretical acquisition of the fundamental knowledge and
knocks based on comparison of both languages.

Therefore it is important in teaching translation to make sure that students have a theoretical understanding of the word combination and features of its statement formation in French so that they may get used to translating always keeping in mind the norms of the usages of French.

As can be seen in practice, it is impossible to translate to suit the feelings of the people of the target country without getting the fundamental principles of translation as well as the linguistic features and usages peculiar in its language.

Learning a foreign language is conducted in close relationship with grasping its features and it can be done more effectively by comparing them with those of your mother tongue.

In order to present the same content using different linguistic material and forms, we should fully understand the mother tongue.

The acquisition in translation lessons.

3. Discussion

— First of all it should be remembered that the French language is generally characterized by transitivity in its utterance.

In case of our students, they tend to translate word-for-word following the sentence structure of Korean text.

For example, when the sentence “대학생들은 키가 크다” (The students are tall.) presented, most students translated it as “Les étudiants sont grands.” or “La taille des étudiants est grande.” These sentences are not incorrect. However, from the point of view of coherence and communication, optimal translation for that sentence is “Ils ont une grande taille”. The reconstructed sentence by changing its communicative theme.

The Korean version of “La taille des étudiants est grande” is “They are tall.”, where “La taille des étudiants” is not a theme but a rheme. It is due to the fact that the French intransitive-transitive shift serves as a medium to change the theme but a rheme. It is due to the fact that the French

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Next important thing in teaching Korean-French translation is to teach the characteristics of French in its usages which requires the grammatical completion compulsorily by comparing them with those of Korean and using a variety of practice patterns.

Except in case of an imperative sentence, abbreviated sentence and incomplete sentence, French sentence should have all the essential parts of sentence such as subject, predicate and object. By contrast, Korean does not have this requirement and it has comparatively more impersonal sentences. In particular, subjects and personal pronouns used as objects are usually omitted in conversation and it is often difficult to be sure about the agent and the object, or the time and place apart from the context.

In teaching translation it is also necessary to emphasize the characteristics of French which requires the agent of speech, act or perception in statement formation. It is because when the translated versions are compared with the original version, it is often the case that two versions are not syntactically identical and the meaning and form are not symmetrical to each other, causing confusion in translation.

C’est le dimanche. → Nous sommes aujourd’hui le dimanche.

A mon côté est assis ma mère. → A mon côté j’ai ma mère.

Une balle me frappe au front. → J’ai reçu une balle au front.

Le héros est né dans cette ville. → Cette ville naquit ce héros.

A 10 heures on a la réunion. → Nous avons la réunion à 10 heures.

J’ai la réunion à 10 heures.

As can be seen from the examples above, the French version for “10 시에 회의가 있다” (We have a meeting at 10 o’clock.) can be either “La réunion se tient à 10 heures” or when translated from the perspective of the third person, “A 10 heures on a la réunion.”

However, the agent can be mentioned like “Nous avons la réunion à 10 heures”, and the better version is made by using the first person to stress the direct subject of the act.” J’ai la
reunion à 10 heures.”

Like in all other subjects, in translation lesson it is important to exclude the jug-filling method of education which focuses on giving the model translation prepared by the teacher and teach them the skill of translation through the practice. Teacher should not demand the students learn the model by heart or only correcting the mistakes but make it the heuristic process of education by explaining the process of translation from the point of the learner. Of course, it does not mean that we should completely exclude the way of training the translation skill by memorizing texts which can serve as models. It is also an effective way in language learning because students can get used to those models by listening and speaking at the same time.

4. Conclusion

In this paper some problems have been observed arising in teaching the features of French language in its usages compared with Korean language in Korean-French translation lessons.

In teaching Korean-French translation skill it is important to teach the structure, means of expression and modes of the target language, French, on the basis of systemization and the correct methodology so that students could understand the principles of the linguistic usages and the formation of statements.

References


