

INFLUENCE OF CHINESE/ENGLISH
THOUGHT PATTERNS ON INTERPRETATION

英汉思维 对比与口译

汪 丽 编著

THOUGHT
PATTERNS



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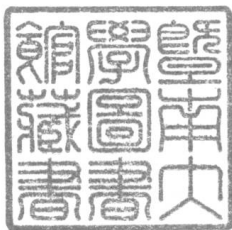
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前 言

现代科学技术的高速发展,使得我们这个世界变得越来越小。随着经济全球化进程的加速、我国加入世界贸易组织、北京举办2008年奥运会以及上海举办2010年世博会的成功,中外交流更趋频繁,中国的国际交流与合作的领域不断扩大,如技术引进、对外贸易、招商引资等,数以千计的外国公司在中国安营扎寨,各类国际组织也争相在中国召开各类会议、举行各种大型活动。翻译,作为沟通中外交流的桥梁,发挥着越来越重要的作用和影响。当今社会对翻译的需求量越来越大,尤其是合格称职的职业口语翻译。大量的社会需求促使越来越多的中国人学习口译翻译,也促使越来越多的中国学者关注口语翻译理论研究。

在当今文化多元化、经济全球化、科学技术一体化的大背景下,越来越多的人认识到翻译不仅仅是两种语言符号之间的相互转换,翻译活动更是一种社会行为、一种文化间的交流与传播。由于中国与英语国家的社会背景与文化传统不同,人们的思维方法也存在着差异。思维是语言转换的基础,思维差异势必会影响两种语言的互相转换,进而影响思想和文化的传递。笔者在著名学者已做研究的基础上,根据中国的国情,结合自己的工作实践,从思维差异的角度探讨了英汉思维差异对口译的影响以及如何克服这些影响。

本书既谈文化思维差异,也谈口译,更重要的是提供了文化思维差异对语言和口译具有影响的大量实例,在对实例加以分析、归类的基础上,对口译活动予以理论上的提高,进行逻辑演

绎推理，以形成新的跨文化交际翻译理论。笔者首先对口译科学和思维科学理论做了简单的介绍，并介绍口译发展进程中有重大影响的几种口译模式。然后阐述不同的英汉思维模式对英汉语言的主要影响。由于不同的地理环境和历史发展进程，中西方具有不同的思维模式、不同的语言表达方法。语言反映了某一民族人们的信仰和思维模式，不同的思维模式也反过来影响着语言。接着笔者从十个方面来分析英汉思维差异对英汉口译的影响，在吸取他人经验的基础上，根据自己的工作经验，尝试寻找解决的办法。最后提出了口译的几个主要策略，即具有普遍指导意义的解决问题的方法。

口译是一种非常具有挑战性的工作，口译人员不仅需要精通双语，而且还需要掌握相关的文化知识、口译的基本技能。翻译是一门开放性的学科，对翻译的探索也应该是永无止境的。

本书的特点是从思维差异的角度来考虑语言的转换问题。笔者希望本书能为高校英语口语的教学活动提供参考，也希望能为刚刚开始从事口译工作的大学毕业生提供帮助，使他们提高口译质量。

本书在编著过程中，参考了中外有关口译、笔译、跨文化交际论著及语法书，吸取了一些有用资料，在此深表谢意。

由于水平所限，书中难免有错漏之处，敬请读者批评指正。

汪 丽

2011 年 4 月于长春

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Introduction

We live in an ever-shrinking world. Along with the deepening of world integration, especially with China's entry to the World Trade Organization, the success of Olympic Beijing 2008' and 2010 World's Exposition in Shanghai, China interchanges with the outside world more and more frequently. International trades and cooperation scopes increase day by day. Thousands of foreign companies build their offices, joint ventures, and even their own subsidiaries in China. International activities like conferences or forums are also often held in China. Interpretation, as one of the most important communicating bridges between China and foreign countries, plays a more and more important role in international exchanges. Social requirements stimulate much interest of Chinese in learning interpreting skills and interpretation has received increasing attention as an object of study by Chinese scholars.

Interpretation is a special type of translating activity (刘宓庆, 2004: 43). Translation (Interpretation/Translation) is a branch of opening and comprehensive knowledge that can be divided into two systems: internal and external. With translation theories as its core, internal system includes basic theories, methodology, procedure theories, styles as well as teaching methods; external system includes philosophical thinking, social culture and linguistic symbol (刘宓庆, 1999: 14 - 20). Many achievements have been rewarded although theoretical studies on interpretation in our country start comparatively late (the First National Conference on Interpreting Practice, Pedagogy

Research held in Xiamen University in September 1996), especially by cross-disciplines experimental studies. However some problems either in theories or in practices remain to be solved.

This book is an introduction to the current understanding about thought and its importance in communication and translation (interpretation). In this book the author, in the light of practice in China and combining her years of experiences, manages to analyze the influence of Chinese/English thought patterns on interpretation and in an attempt to find out how to overcome the difficulties brought by cultural discrepancies in interpretation. This book examines influence of C/E thought patterns on interpretation within a theoretical framework of intercultural communication theories. The theories reviewed the argument that language and culture are intimately connected and that interpretation is an act of communication across cultures that prescribes not only linguistic competence but also a profound understanding of the social norms, values, and way of life of the cultural community.

The purpose of this book is to gain an increased understanding of the relationship between language and culture, between the linguistic and cultural factors of the interpretation process. It is to determine if and how to break down the barriers to intercultural communication in light of the influence on Chinese/English interpretation brought forth by different thought patterns. Interpretation is a very challenging job, which requires language proficiency in both source language and target language, in respective cultures, basic skills or techniques, the quick response in the real world as well as intensive training. The author hopes that this book may be helpful to the college English

teachers and to the students who hope to be interpreters in the future as well as to the young interpreters who hope to improve their professional proficiency so as to improve their servicing qualities.

The book is divided into Five Chapters:

Chapter One begins with a literature review on some theories of interpretation and thought. The author introduces some famous interpreting models in the development of interpretation. Emphasis is given to the triangle model of thinking process during interpretation initiated by Interpretive School. Interpreting is not a word for word process, but meaning transference aimed at communication.

Chapter Two is concerned with some influences of Chinese and English thought patterns on language. The Chapter begins with a brief survey of the Eastern thought pattern and Western thought pattern, followed by relationship among culture, language and thought. Then the author gives two factors that contribute an important role to Chinese and English thought patterns; one is Man-and-Nature relationship determined by the natural environment, the other is the philosophical root. On the later part of Chapter Two the author points out some main aspects of influence of Chinese/English thought patterns on Chinese/English languages respectively.

Chapter Three deals with influence of Chinese and English thought patterns on interpretation. In this Chapter, with many practical examples, the author tries to analyze the aspects of influence of C/E thought patterns on interpretation and tries to give some tentative approaches to solve the problems brought by the differences.

Chapter Four introduces some strategies on how to become a good interpreter.

Chapter Five is a conclusion. Interpreting is a very challenging job, which requires language proficiency in both source and target language, in respective cultures, basic skills or techniques, the quick response in the real world as well as intensive training.

Chapter One

On Interpretation and Thought

1.1 Interpretation

1.1.1 Interpretation

Interpretation is a kind of communicative act, which means an extempore oral reproduction, in one language, of what is said in another language (钟述孔, 1999). Interpretation practically came into existence when people of different communities started trading. It serves as lubricants that push human society wheeling forward. Take China for instance, as early as the Shang Dynasty, there were such people appointed as interpreters who acted as a medium for communication among different ethnic groups in China. The fact that the successive reigns of the Dynasty appointed an official to be in charge of translation (interpretation) affairs indicates that translation was an indispensable act in the political circle and cultural exchanges among ethnic groups at that time.

As proved by practice, interpretation cannot be viewed as a merely linguistic undertaking, but should be regarded as an aspect of communication. In the case of complex discourses or speeches interpretation involves not only linguistic proficiency, but also encyclopedic knowledge.

1.1.2 Interpretation and Translation

Interpretation is a special type of translation, that is, oral

translation. So some theories on translation also apply to interpretation.

What is translation? It is difficult to give a completely satisfied definition. Wolfram Wilss puts it in this way, "Translation refers to the inter-lingual transference which includes literal translation and even quite free translation." (Lefevere, Andre, 1992: 18) Petrus Danielus, then, describes it like translation is "a text written in a well-known language which refers to and represents a text in a language which is not as well known" (Lefevere, Andre, 1992: 1). Peter Newmark defines translation: "It is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text." (Peter Newmark, 2001: 5) Roger T. Bell said, "Translation is the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, serving semantic and stylistic equivalencies." (Roger T. Bell, 2001: 5) Defining translation has been problematic, as the multitude of definitions are most often aligned with a particular theoretical position held by those engaged in translation studies, be it philosophical, ideological, political, literary, cultural, linguistic or historical (D. Robinson, 1997). The versions of translation's definition may vary. Nevertheless, all can be boiled down to the fact that translation is a transformational activity between two languages. This book looks at translation from a new angle, as intercultural communication.

"Translating", as I. A. Richards claims, "is probably the most complex type of event in the history of cosmos" (E. A. Nida, 1993: 1). Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the

closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida & Taber, 1969: 12). The aim of translation is to pass on as much as possible of the information that is contained in translation in a different language. Translation concerns many branches of knowledge, such as sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, neurolinguistics, semiotics, philosophy, aesthetics, cross-cultural communication, etc. Interpretation, too, concerns all these branches of knowledge. Only that interpretation is a kind of speaking activity, colloquialism is one of its characteristics, i. e. words, phrases and sentence structures, etc. used in interpretation should be suitable for normal conversation.

Interpretation as an object of scientific investigation combines the complexity of language comprehension and production with that of human behavior, which, in our case, is determined by many factors and is constrained by highly diverse environments. It follows that before major conclusions about thought differences and interpretation are drawn from research, a very large number of situations, variables and interactions must be studied, probably more than in many other fields of human behavior.

1.1.3 The Two Most Widely-Used Forms of Interpretation

Interpretation may assume either of the two most widely used distinct forms—consecutive interpretation or simultaneous interpretation. In case the interpreter is under the instructions to interpret between chunks of the original speech (or rather, immediately after the original speaker has completed a few connected sentences or, in most cases, a

fairly long paragraph), he will be doing consecutive interpretation, and he is technically referred to as a consecutive interpreter. On the other hand, if he is instructed to interpret while the original speech is being made, as is always the case with formal meetings at the U. N. and its related agencies, then he will be doing simultaneous interpretation, and he is called a simultaneous interpreter or conference interpreter (钟述孔, 1999).

1.1.4 The Characteristics of Interpretation

Interpretation is a special language communicative activity and it has some distinct features.

First, interpretation is unpredictable. On many interpretation occasions, the topics are variable and unpredictable, such as press conferences and commercial negotiations. The interpreter can estimate the topics according to the fixed themes; however, the subjective prediction is not reliable completely, sometimes it is misleading.

Secondly, pressure is another feature of interpretation. Sometimes the interpretation occasion is very serious, such as the international conference and the diplomatic negotiation. The serious occasion may make the inexperienced interpreter feel nervous and unconfident, which might lead to frequent mistakes.

Another characteristic of interpretation is great responsibility. The interpreter must be responsible for what he interprets. If a mistake is made, he even doesn't have a chance to remedy for it. Therefore, the interpreter is required to master the knowledge of various fields.

1. 1. 5 The Important Role of Interpreters

In a process of intercultural communication, the interpreter is an indispensable communication medium between two parties who do not know the language the other party members speaking. More over, the interpreter is also an indispensable lever to assure communication quality, speed, effect, as well as focal points. Compared with translators (the result of the work is a written text), the obvious difficulty lays that interpreters have no time to think over while interpreting, to say nothing of looking up dictionaries or reference books; for simultaneous interpretation, it is a rather complex cognitive task. During simultaneous interpretation attention has to be divided between the comprehension of input and the production of output. Therefore, a professional interpreter is required not only to master the interpreting rules and skills fully but also to possess a high degree of responsibility, to have a good linguistic knowledge of the two languages, and to hold as much as possible the so-called “encyclopedia knowledge” (R. T. Bell, 1991: 245).

1. 1. 6 Basic Requirements for Interpreters

An interpreter must hold: (1) a strong sense of duty; (2) linguistic proficiency; (3) encyclopedia knowledge; (4) mastery of interpretation techniques (钟述孔, 1999). He must be conscientious in pre-conference preparations, in following the original speaker and furnishing the best possible rendition, and in abiding the relevant rules and regulations, etc.

(1) Linguistic proficiency, in the context of interpretation,