



中外翻译理论教程

Translation Theory: A Coursebook

©主 编 黎昌抱 邵 斌



OCSFEM 东方剑桥英语专业系列教材



ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS
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Translation Theory: A Coursebook

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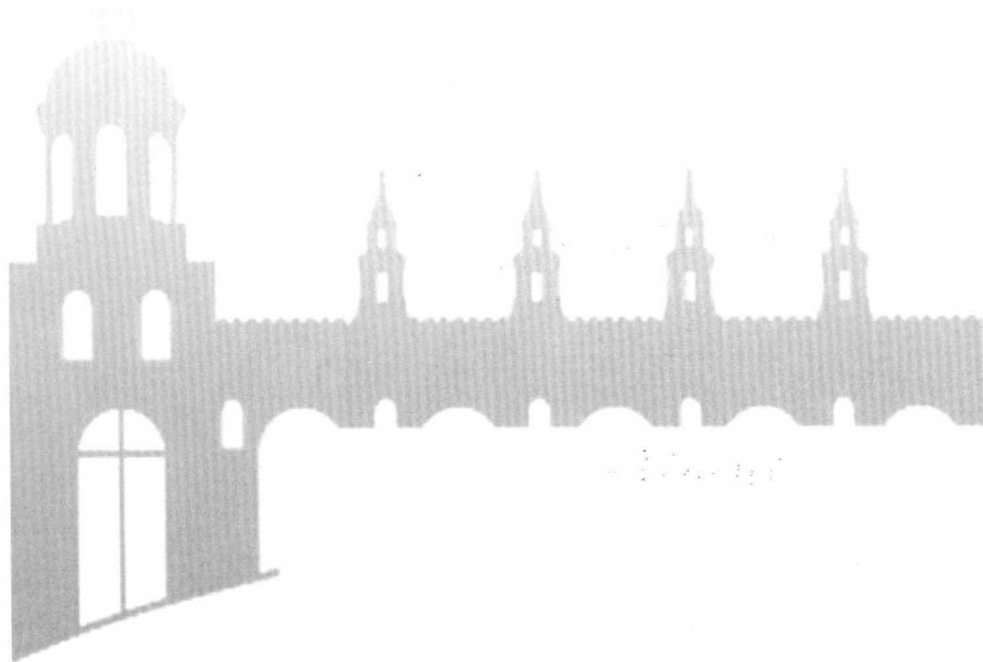
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浙江省“十一五”高校重点教材



前言

随着我国对高水平翻译人才需求的迅速增加以及翻译研究的不断发展,翻译专业和翻译学已经分别作为单独专业和独立学科正式列入国家本科专业和二级学科目录。然而,虽然目前我国已有各类翻译教材多达数百种,但涉及翻译理论的教材却屈指可数。

首先,在中国翻译理论方面,这些书籍多以中文著述,概括起来,大致有三类:

一是以论集的形式呈现,如罗新璋的《翻译论集》、中国译协的《翻译研究论文集》等;

二是以史论的形式呈现,如马祖毅的《中国翻译史》、陈福康的《中国译学理论史稿》和王秉钦的《20 世纪中国翻译思想史》等;

三是对某译论家理论进行个案研究,如沈苏儒的《论“信达雅”——严复翻译理论研究》、刘全福的《翻译家周作人论》和顾钧的《鲁迅翻译研究》等。

大家知道,英语专业的翻译理论课教学一般应以英语授课为主,所以与之对应的教材最好是英文教材。虽然也偶有关于中国翻译理论的英文译本,如香港地区张佩瑶等编译的《中国翻译话语英译选集》和陈德鸿的《20 世纪中国翻译理论》,但前者仅限于古代佛经的传译,后者只涉及 20 世纪。如果作为教材,似乎仍有不妥。

其次,相比之下,西方翻译理论书籍则相对较多,且多有英文教材,但其读者往往是以英语为母语的翻译研究工作者,内容往往较为宏大,语言通常较为艰深,如 Mona Baker 主编的《翻译研究百科全书》、Douglas Robinson 主编的《西方翻译理论》。Susan Bassnett 编著的《翻译研究》所面向的读者是对西方翻译有一定了解的学者,因此提纲挈领有余,详尽阐述不足。Jeremy Munday 的《翻译学导论》侧重现当代的翻译理论,对历史上的西方翻译理论梳理似乎不很充分。此外,虽然也不乏关于西方翻译家流派和个案研究的英文著作,但它们更适用于翻译研究。还有一些中国著名学者用中文编纂的西方翻译理论著作,似也不宜作为教材使用。于是,《中外翻译理论教程》(英文版)应运而生。

《中外翻译理论教程》是浙江省“十一五”高校重点教材建设项目成果,是一部面向高校(英汉)翻译专业和英语专业翻译方向学生,基于四轮课堂教学实践,适合两个学期教学需要,涵盖中西方翻译重要理论,既简明易懂又基于原典的中外翻译理论英文教材。

全书分“上编”(Part I)和“下编”(Part II)两大部分,各十五章,共三十章。在理论

体系上,本书强调“三抓”:一抓主线,即抓住中西翻译史上的主要事件;二抓主角,即抓住中西翻译史上的主要代表性人物;三抓主题,即中西翻译史最具代表性的翻译理论和思想。为此,在内容编排上,本书具有三大特点:

(1)颇具特色的编排思路。本书把中国翻译理论和西方翻译理论合二为一,融入同一部书。在具体篇章中,以译家个案为主线,以流派作为暗线来处理,并以历时期逐一编写,有利于将某个译论家的重要译论全面系统地反映出来,也有利于读者了解某个时期某个译论家或流派的重要译论。

(2)别具一格的章节编排。本书每一章一般以“正文”和“附录”两大部分为编排形式。“正文”部分包括“译论家的生平和翻译活动介绍”、“译论家的重要翻译理论”(包括学界后人对其译论的评价)、“译论家的翻译实践”(“上编”尤为突出)。其中“译论家的翻译理论”是最重要的主体部分,注重对于译论家原典的阅读,所以尽量从译论家的著作、序言等原典文献中选取,让学生接触原汁原味的译论家理论和思想。正因为此,所以本书在用英文编写“上编”的同时,还着重在一些地方分别附注标明相关中国译论家的汉语原典文字。“附录”部分由“课后练习”(一般2~3题)和“参考文献及进一步阅读文献”构成,以适应学生复习和课后进一步学习的需要。

(3)注重理论结合实践。本书在突出译论家翻译理论的同时,还注重对其翻译实践的讨论,通过征引译论家自己的翻译实践来佐证或反证其翻译理论的可行性和一致性。如果译论家的翻译实践涉及学生不熟悉的语种,或者译论者是一位纯理论家,缺少相应的翻译实践,本书则征引其他相关的翻译实例,进一步阐明其翻译理论的内涵和指导意义。这样,可以让学生感同身受地体会到翻译理论的重要性,及其对翻译实践的指导作用。

本书由浙江财经大学翻译研究所翻译教学团队编写完成,编写人员的具体分工为:陈向红编写“上编”的第5、9和10章;余晓燕完成“下编”的第10、13和14章;缪佳编写“上编”的第12章以及“下编”的第11、12和15章;邵斌完成了其余20章;黎昌抱负责本书的组织策划及全书的审稿统稿出版工作。

最后,要感谢浙江省教育厅对浙江省高校重点教材建设工作的重视和推进,并为本书出版提供经费支持!感谢浙江省大学外语教学指导委员会和浙江财经大学的鼎力支持!感谢浙江大学出版社张琛和陈丽勋编辑对本书的顺利出版提供的大力帮助。

因编者水平所限,加之教学科研任务繁重,谬误之处在所难免,敬请读者不吝指正。

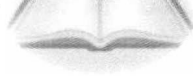
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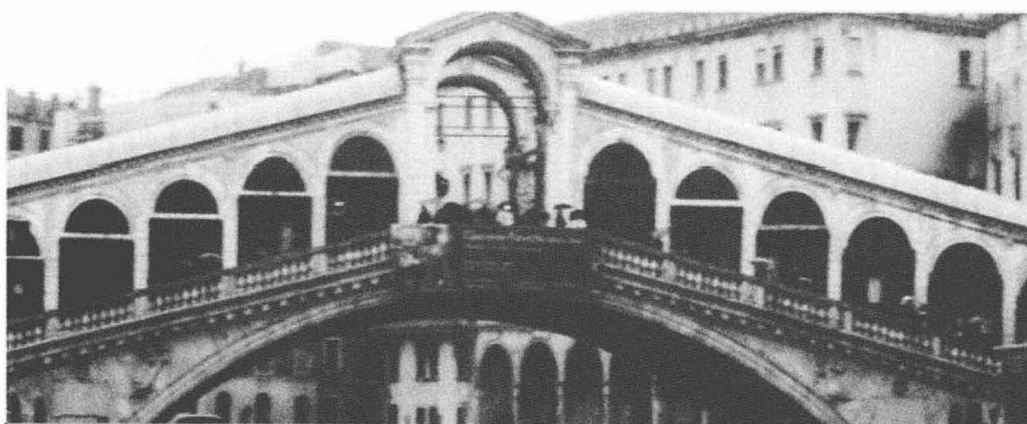
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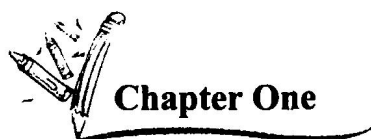


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Part I

Chinese Translation Theory





Chapter One

The Translation of Buddhist Scriptures



1 Introduction

There have been waves of translation throughout Chinese history, sometimes predominantly into Chinese, and occasionally predominantly out of Chinese into other languages. The introduction of Buddhism from the 2nd century was dependent on translation, and the movement brought a new development to the Chinese language. The period of Jesuit mission in China in the 17th century in the Ming Dynasty, brought another substantial impetus to the activity of translation. A third major wave was that of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when China became acutely aware of the need for modern Western science and technology. The adoption of foreign writing in vernacular Chinese during the first half of the 20th century might be regarded as the fourth. Now, in the 21st century, on the one hand China is integrating into global economy and culture, on the other hand the western world has woken up to China, and has realised that the biggest nation on earth does not necessarily write in English. So now we are embracing the fifth translation wave.

At the very beginning, Chinese translation theory was born out of contact with vassal states during the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC–771 BC). Early texts contain various words for “interpreter” or “translator.” *The Classic of Rites* claims that there is one word for each direction. The people living in different regions of the country could not understand one another’s languages. Their likings, needs and desires were all different. There were officers whose duties were to understand these people’s minds and ideas, and communicate their likings and needs. These officers held the post of “ji” in the east, “xiang” in the south, “didi” in the west, and “yi” in the north (中国戎夷，五方之民。东方曰夷。南方曰蛮。西方曰戎。北方曰狄。五方之民。言语不通。嗜欲不同。达其志。通其欲。东方曰寄。南方曰象。西方曰狄鞮。北方曰译。) It has been claimed that “yi” (译) finally survived and became the sole word for “translator” because in the Han Dynasty and the period of disunion, most translation activities were involved with the north. Other words are “tongue person” (舌人) and “return tongue” (反舌).

The large-scale translation activities in ancient China, however, are accompanied by the

introduction of Buddhism. It is agreed that translation of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese in great numbers did not begin until the end of the Later Han Dynasty, that is, the middle of the 2nd century AD, when An Shigao and Lokaksema came to Luoyang. With the middle of the 2nd century as the starting point, translation of Buddhist scriptures in China from the end of the Later Han Dynasty to the end of the Northern Song Dynasty (12th century AD) can be divided into four stages: initial period, and the periods of development, prosperity, and decline.

2 Initial Period

In the early part of this period, leading translators of Buddhist scriptures were mainly Buddhist missionaries who had journeyed over the silk road and made their way into China from Central Asia, as represented by An Shigao and Lokaksema.

An Shigao (?–168 AD) was a prince of Parthia, nicknamed the “Parthian Marquis” (安侯), who renounced his prospect as a contender for the royal throne of Parthia in order to serve as a Buddhist missionary monk. *An* in An Shigao’s name is an abbreviation of *Anxi* (安息), meaning *Parthia* in ancient Chinese. In 148, An Shigao arrived in China at the Han Dynasty capital of Luoyang, where he set up a centre for the translation of Buddhist texts. He translated thirty-five texts from the Theravada and Mahayana schools of Buddhism, including works on meditation, psychology, and techniques of breath control, introducing the basic Abhidharmic doctrine and the meditative method of the Hinayana school of Buddhism and, for some Chinese scholars, originating what later developed into the study of Zen.

Zhi Qian (支谦) was a Kushan Buddhist monk of Yuezhi ethnicity who translated around thirty-six Buddhist sutras into Chinese between 222 AD and 253 AD. His origin is described in his adopted Chinese name by the prefix *Zhi* (支), abbreviation of *Yuezhi* (月支). Zhi Qian studied with Zhi Liang, who was one of the disciples of Lokaksema (支娄迦讖). The name “Lokaksema” means “welfare of the world” in Sanskrit. He translated a large quantity of scriptures. The earliest record of a *Heart Sutra* (《心经》) text is a translation attributed to him.

Zhi Qian wrote a preface in the translation of *Dhammapada* (《法句经》). The preface is the first work whose purpose is to express an opinion about translation practice. It recounts an historical anecdote of 224 AD, at the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period. A party of Buddhist monks came to Wuchang. One of them, Zhu Jiangyan by name, was asked to translate some passage from scripture. He did so, in rough Chinese. When Zhi Qian questioned the lack



of elegance, another monk, named Wei Qi, responded that the meaning of the Buddha should be translated simply, without loss, in an easy-to-understand manner: literary adornment is unnecessary. All present concurred and quoted two traditional maxims: Laozi's "beautiful words are untrue; true words are not beautiful" and Confucius' "speech cannot be fully recorded by writing, and speech cannot fully capture meaning."

Zhi Qian's own translations of Buddhist texts are elegant and literary, so the "direct translation" advocated in the anecdote is like Wei Qi's position, not Zhi Qian's.

3 The Period of Development

The second period lasts from the early 4th century to the 7th century, with Dao'an as a representative. Dao'an (道安; 312–385) was a Buddhist monk of the Eastern Jin Dynasty, originating from what is now Hebei Province. Mainly important today as a translator of Buddhist scripture, he was active in Xiangyang until Emperor Xiaowu took the city in 380 and asked Dao'an to live in Changan. He spent the last years of life translating and interpreting scripture as well as compiling a catalogue of scriptures. He also advocated monks and nuns taking *Shi* (释) as a surname, from the Chinese for Sakyamuni.

Dao'an played an important role in the development of Buddhism in China. His greatest contributions are: summing up the doctrines of the two schools of dhyana and prajnaparamita which had been popular in China since the Han Dynasty, collecting and systematizing various Chinese versions of Buddhist scriptures, and compiling the first collection of Chinese versions of Buddhist scriptures: *A Comprehensive Catalogue of Various Sutras* (《综理众经目录》). He also directed the translation of Buddhist scriptures in the translation center.

He was a prolific author and commentator. In his commentarial work, Dao'an was one of the first to acknowledge the need to break dependence on the translation method of matching the meanings of Buddhist philosophical concepts with pre-existent Daoist terms, desiring instead the establishment of an independent Buddhist system of terminology. His great contribution in translation theory is his advocacy of Five Losses, the five points in which the meaning of the original lost through translation. The five points are as follows.

(1) Sanskrit and Chinese are in reversing word order in sentence structure, as far as the grammar is concerned. (2) Sanskrit prefers to be simple and straight forward, while Chinese prefers to be complex, polished in writing. (3) Sanskrit tends to be repetitive for important points while Chinese does not. (4) Sanskrit always contains sentences within sentences, while Chinese does not. (5) Sanskrit writing is repetitive in subsequent passage, while the repetitions are deleted in Chinese translations. (五失本, 即胡语尽倒而使从秦, 一失本也; 胡经尚质, 秦人好文, 传可众心, 非文不合, 二失本也; 胡经委悉, 至于叹咏, 丁宁反复, 或三或四, 不嫌其烦, 而今裁斥, 三失本也; 胡有义记, 正似乱辞, 寻说向语,

文无以异，或千五百，刈而不存，四失本也；事已全成，将更傍及，反腾前辞已乃后说而悉除，五失本也。)

Another important translator in this period is Kumarajiva (鸠摩罗什). He was born in Kucha (龟兹) in Central Asia. Kumarajiva was a Kuchean Buddhist monk, scholar and translator whose father was from an Indian noble family, and whose mother was a Kuchean princess who significantly influenced his early studies. He settled in Chang'an. He is mostly remembered for his prolific translation of Buddhist texts written in Sanskrit to Chinese that he carried out during his later life. Among the most important texts translated by Kumarajiva are the *Diamond Sutra*, *Amitabha Sutra* and *Lotus Sutra*. His translation was distinctive, possessing a flowing smoothness that reflects his prioritization on conveying the meaning as opposed to precise literal rendering. Because of this, his renderings of seminal Mahayana texts have often remained more popular than later, more exact translations.

Kumarajiva preferred to adhering to the original meaning. The story goes that one day Kumarajiva criticized his disciple Sengrui for translating "heaven sees man, and man sees heaven" (天见人，人见天). Kumarajiva felt that "man and heaven connect, the two able to see each other" (人天交接，两得相见) would be more idiomatic.

In another tale, Kumarajiva discussed the problem of translating incantations and panegyrics at the end of sutras. In the original there is attention to aesthetics, but the sense of beauty and the literary form (dependent on the particularities of Sanskrit) are lost in translation. It is like chewing up rice to feed people (嚼饭与人), losing the flavor and inducing disgust.

4 The Period of Prosperity

The period of the Tang Dynasty (618–906) witnessed not only the most splendid flourishing of Chinese literature, but also the most splendid flourishing of the translation of Buddhist scriptures in China, when the enterprise entered its stage of great prosperity. Although foreign missionaries continued to travel to China and to play an important part in the translation of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese, when Xuanzang returned to Chang'an from India in 645, the days when they could dominate this enterprise were gone forever. The leadership in translating Buddhist scriptures into Chinese was taken over by eminent Chinese monks with a profound knowledge of Buddhism and a good command of both Chinese and Sanskrit.



Xuanzang (600–664), better known as “Sanzang Fashi” (Master Tripitaka), came from a noble family in China. He became a Buddhist monk at Luoyang at the age of fifteen. Having learnt many canons or treatises from various distinguished scholars, he felt that no final conclusion could be reached as the doctrines varied, and determined to go to India for further studies. He spent seventeen years in India, touring more than one hundred states. Early in 645 he returned to China, bringing back with him 657 Buddhist scriptures, unprecedented in both number and variety. Since then, Xuanzang dedicated himself to the career of translating Buddhist scriptures. He worked as Chief Translator at the translation center in Chang’an. In 19 years, he and his associates rendered into Chinese of 75 Buddhist scriptures, 1,335 fascicles in all. He produced over half of the total number of the new translations made in the Tang Dynasty. He also wrote “Journey to the West in the Great Tang Dynasty” in 646–648, which recorded all his experience during his travel, and later his biography.

His great contribution to translation theory is the advocacy of *Five Untranslatables*, the five instances we can not translate the meaning of the original, but refer to transliteration as a resort. They are described as follows. (1) Secrets, for example, Dharani, a Sanskrit curse; (2) Polysemy, Bhagavan for instance for this Sanskrit word has six meanings; (3) None in China: Jambul for example, a kind of tree that does not grow in China; (4) Deference to the past: Anubodhi for a special kind of knowledge. This transliteration is an established usage; (5) To inspire respect and righteousness: Prajna instead of “wisdom.” (玄奘法师论五种不翻：一秘密故，如陀罗尼。二含义多故，如薄伽梵具六义。三此无故，如阎浮树，中夏实无此木。四顺古故，如阿耨菩提，非不可翻，而摩腾以来长存梵音。五生善故，如般若尊重，智慧轻浅。)

In addition, the excellence of his translations of the Buddhist scriptures is due above all to Xuanzang’s mastery of both Sanskrit and Chinese, and to his profound knowledge and understanding of Buddhist doctrines. Earlier great translators were either ignorant of Sanskrit, like Dao’an, or lacked a proficiency in Chinese, like Kumarajiva. The quality of their translations was inevitably affected because they had to depend on something other than the source text or something. That is why they had to first produce a word-for-word translation structurally identical to the original. This first version then was put into grammatically correct Chinese before it was polished. In the case of Xuanzang, the division of duties was even more detailed, yet the translation was basically made by himself. In other words, he abandoned the old process of having the scripture put into interlinear Chinese first. Instead, he put the Sanskrit text directly into good Chinese. As to the style, Xuanzang’s translations can be considered literal in contrast with Kumarajiva’s which retained the gist of the original only, but free in contrast with Yijing’s translations which were full of difficult or unpronounceable words.

The organization of the translation center led by Xuanzang was further perfected, and more than ten duties were established:

(1) The Yizhu or Chief Translator (译主) who, as the head of the translation center, had a good knowledge of both Chinese, Sanskrit, and Buddhist doctrine.

(2) The Zhengyi (证义), the assistant to Chief Translator who discussed with Chief Translator all the differences in meaning between the translation and the Sanskrit text.

(3) The Chengwen (澄文), who was in charge of finding out possible errors in the original Sanskrit text.

(4) The Duyu (度语), who interpreted Sanskrit into Chinese.

(5) The Bishou (笔受), who recorded the Chinese interpretation and turned it into the first draft of a translation.

(6) The Zhuwen (缀文), who put the translated version into grammatically correct Chinese.

(7) The Canyi (参译), who not only proofread the original for possible errors but also used the translation to find out if the original contained variant readings.

(8) The Kanding (刊定), who was in charge of deleting redundancy and repetition due to differences in style between Chinese and Sanskrit.

(9) The Runwen (润文), who polished the Chinese translation rhetorically.

(10) The Fanbai (梵呗), who read or recited the translation in the way of reading or reciting the Sanskrit text to see if the translation sounded harmonious and appropriate for monks to read.

The decline of the translation of Buddhist scriptures in the Northern Song Dynasty was not so much one of quantity as of quality. With the patronage of the emperors the translation center getting even better organized, and the scriptures translated were as many as 284 books of 758 rolls. Yet in terms of quality, translations of Buddhist scriptures produced during this stage prove definitely inferior to those rendered during the Tang Dynasty, especially to the translations by Xuanzang which have always been acclaimed as the acme of perfection.

5 Exercises

(1) Summarize the different translation styles of the great Buddhist scriptures translators mentioned in this introduction.

(2) Select some translated classic scriptures paragraphs to analyze if the comments of the translators are pertinent or not.

6 References and Further Readings

(1) Cheung, Martha P.Y. *Volume 1: From Earliest Times to the Buddhist Project*. In: *An*

Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation. Manchester & Kinderhook: St. Jerome Publishing, 2006.

(2) 王宏印. 中国传统译论经典诠释: 从道安到傅雷. 武汉: 湖北教育出版社, 2003.

