



TEACHING MATERIALS
FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS
高等学校教材

实用英语翻译教程

A PRACTICAL COURSE: ENGLISH-CHINESE &
CHINESE-ENGLISH TRANSLATION

郭月琴 主编

中国石油大学出版社

RIALS
UDENTS

实用英语翻译教程

A Practical Course: English-Chinese & Chinese-English Translation

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前 言

Preface



为了提高英语学习者的翻译水平,多年从事高校英语翻译教学实践的一线教师针对高年级大学生和低年级研究生特定的学习需求和兴趣,严格按照教育部的相关要求,组织编写了本书。

本书为中国石油大学(华东)“十二五”规划教材。与传统翻译教材相比,本书的特色在于:主要用英语编写,既便于教师课堂操作,又能培养读者的双语语感;翻译技巧和实用翻译并重,添加了学生切实需要掌握的求职信和个人简历、出国留学申请、摘要、科技英语、合同以及法律英语的翻译,还有一些时新的网络语言的翻译等,并通过大量的翻译实例对英汉翻译中常见的技巧与方法和各种翻译文体进行了归纳与讲评。本书内容丰富,讲练互补,注重实践和实用,着力培养学生对翻译过程的感知力、领悟力和实际运用能力。翻译实例多是从报纸、杂志或网络上精选的时新、典型而又富有趣味性的例子。每一章都是按照讲座的形式来编排的,开头用几句英语导入,然后列出两个翻译实践题,英汉和汉英翻译各一个,或句子、或短文,注重趣味性和典型性。正文部分以英译汉为主,简介汉译英。最后是相应的练习题。

本书共12个单元,内容上力求简明扼要,每一单元都按照“相关技巧训练实例—翻译理论与技巧精讲精练—翻译练习”的顺序编排,使学生所掌握的理论与实践紧密结合,认识不断升华。本书还本着“CLIL”的教学理念,注重实用内容和语言技能的融合,围绕学生的兴趣展开教学,当堂训练翻译方法,积极引导學生进行英汉语言对比,获得翻译所需的文化背景知识,了解英汉语言的共性与差异、英汉文体特征、译文优劣分析和翻译策略选择方法等,奠定扎实的语言基础,培养双语语感、翻译意识和文化敏感性,提高英汉双语快速转换能力和各种文体的翻译实战能力。

编 者

2012年12月



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Introduction

One day an English-lover, my student, came to me and asked me to help him translate the following sentence into Chinese: To be, or not to be, that is the question. This question attracted my attention immediately. The student seemed to be satisfied after I told him that it is a well-known sentence from Shakespeare's drama *Hamlet*. In the drama, Hamlet's endurance has reached the breaking point. His father has been murdered. His mother, who he loves dearly, has married her dead husband's brother. Moreover, his sweetheart, Ophelia, has been acting very strangely. He senses that she does not love him any more. Now, he's all alone. The world that he knew is shattered. His black mood of despair is deepened by his inability to act or to do something to change the situation. Now he ponders whether to continue living or to take his own life. Therefore, this sentence can be translated into “生存还是毁灭, 这是一个问题”. It means it is really hard to make a choice or decision.

On another occasion a student of mine asked me how to translate the Chinese “千里姻缘一线牵” into English. With interest I studied it for a while and offered the following translation for his reference: *Two beings destined to marry each other, though thousands of miles apart, are tied together with an invisible red thread by an old man under the moonlight*. Seeing the smile on the student's face, I felt satisfied and became more and more interested in the teaching of translation.

In this book many aspects of translation are touched upon with a lot of practice and exercises for practical purpose. Now let's look at some examples first.

Practice

English-Chinese Translation

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| (1) corporate image | (2) eight-part essay |
| (3) Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea | (4) start from scratch |
| (5) lap dog | (6) tug-of-war |
| (7) Prince Charming | (8) Snow White |
| (9) everything under the sun | (10) conservation of both moisture and soil |

Chinese-English Translation

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| (1) 市场经济 | (2) 企业文化 |
| (3) 青出于蓝而胜于蓝 | (4) 奥运会火炬接力跑 |

And here comes the question: what is translation?

As a means of communication, translation plays an important role in human civilization. In the West, literary translation can be traced back to 300 BC, while in China, recorded translation activities are even earlier, dating from the Zhou Dynasty (1,100 BC). However, not until recent centuries, especially by the end of the 19th century did systematic study of translation get underway. In the past decades translation theories and activities have developed fast both at home and abroad.

A modern society sees an extensive use of translation on various occasions. If a foreign language is generally accepted as a tool of life, translation then obviously serves as a dynamic means of employing this tool. A proper and dexterous translation helps to promote mutual understanding between peoples of different cultural and social backgrounds, whereas a misunderstanding or improper rendering of words or expressions may lead to confusion, e.g. menu—菜单; 选项, 项目单.

1.1

Definition of Translation

Translation means the conversion of an expression from one language into another. To put it plainly, translation is the art of reproducing the exact idea of the author by means of a

language different from the original. From the above definition of translation we know that the original thought of the expression must be kept as much as possible. Nothing should be added to or taken away from the original work. The duty of the translator is simply to change the vocabulary, not the thought. In translation, therefore, there are two essential elements: accuracy and expressiveness. Accuracy is the first indispensable quality of translation. The translator must cautiously stick to the author's idea. Words selected and sentences constructed must be such as to convey the exact original thought. Expressiveness is to make the translation readily understood. In other words, the translator must express the author's idea as clearly and as forcibly as he can by the medium he employs. Accuracy is to make the thought definite and exact; while expressiveness is to make the translation vivid and attractive.

According to American scholar Eugene Nida, translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, firstly in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Eugene A. Nida & Charles R. Taber, 1969). Nida's explanation shows the complexity of translation. In order to convey the original information clearly, translators have to complete the complicated recreative process from the understanding of the original words to the expressions in target language.

A typical example is Francis Bacon's *Of Studies* (《论读书》): *Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man;...Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend.* 读书使人充实, 讨论使人机智, 笔记使人准确……读史使人明智, 读诗使人灵秀, 数学使人周密, 科学使人深刻, 伦理学使人庄重, 逻辑修辞学使人善辩。(王佐良译)

The above translation is highly praised because it not only conveys the original meaning faithfully but also maintains the original feature and style.

So translation is a branch of science and also a branch of art; it is a creative language (thinking) activity which combines art and science.

1.2

Criteria for Translation

Translation criteria is a measure for translation quality and a guideline for translation practice. In the late 19th century, Yan Fu (1853–1921) proposed the principles of translation: *faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance*, which are greatly influential for a period of time. However, different scholars in this field have different opinions about the translation criteria.

Although there is no consensus on the criteria for translation, the principles of *faithfulness* and *smoothness* are generally accepted. *Faithfulness* means, first of all, translators should convey exactly the original content, style, opinions, attitudes and feelings faithfully, and then make sure that the original meaning is not distorted or amplified or omitted casually. *Smoothness* refers to the fact that translation should be easily understood and in line with the habitual expression of the target language. For instance, in the case of English-Chinese translation, translators should use idiomatic Chinese and avoid Europeanized Chinese. Therefore, the ideal translation should be fluent and smooth, avoiding the rigid word-to-word translation. In other words, the ideal translation should, on the basis of a thorough understanding of the original, express the ideas explicitly and idiomatically, instead of being fettered by the language forms of the source language.

Now look at the following example:

John can be relied on. He eats no fish and plays the game.

约翰为人可靠,他既忠实又正直。

In this sentence “to eat no fish” is an allusion, and “to play the game” is an idiom. In Elizabethan England, the anti-government Catholics only ate fish on Fridays, while the Christians, in order to prove their loyalty to the British government, refused to follow the custom. Thus “to eat no fish” means *loyalty*. And “to play the game” has similar meaning with *to play fair*, which means “follow rules, play the game in order”, or “treat somebody fairly, behave honestly or be loyal”, and can be translated into “公平对待”, “举止光明正大”, “为人正直”. The translation follows the principles of *faithfulness* and *smoothness*, and expresses clearly the original meaning: John is honest and loyal and can be relied on (约翰为人可靠, 他既忠实又正直). Obviously, the translation is smooth and in line with idiomatic Chinese.

1.3

Classification of Translation

Translation can be classified from several aspects: ① from the point of source language and target language, translation can be classified into two kinds: from native language to foreign language, and from foreign language to native language. ② from means of translation, there are three kinds: interpretation, written translation and machine translation. ③ from content of translation, there are translations of literature, politics, technology and business, etc. Different kinds of translation need different standards. We should pay attention to their commonness

and individuality.

1.4

Process of Translation

The process of translation is a process of understanding the original text correctly and reproducing it creatively in another language. This process can be divided into three stages: comprehension, expression and proofreading.

1) Comprehension

Comprehension is the first step of translation and the prerequisite of expression. Consider the example below.

The commander ordered our company to start the attack before dawn.

指挥官命令我们连队在黎明前发起进攻。

(Company means army, business group or companion, but “commander” and “attack” tell us it means army here.)

In order to understand the text thoroughly, translators need to study its language, logic and phenomena mentioned in the text. Meanwhile, translators should understand the text in its context. Here are two other examples:

You can't be too careful.

你怎么小心都不过分。

He lost a cool thousand dollars.

他损失了整整 1 000 美元。

For another example, if a boss says “you are late for the last time” to one employer who is often late, he means you are fired (你被解雇了, you will never have another chance to be late), not you can not be late next time.

2) Expression

Expression means that translators re-express their own understanding of the text in the native language. In the following part, the principles that should be noticed in the process of expressing will be discussed from three aspects.

(1) Expressiveness

Expressiveness means translators employ their mastery of the source language to express

the original ideas, attitudes and style completely and properly, and avoid over-expression or inadequacy of expression. For example:

He sold hard-to-get items.

他出售紧俏商品。

At this his heart missed a beat and he became pale.

他(听到这话)心里一跳,脸色也变了。

(2) Literal translation and free translation

Should we translate literally or freely? The answer is that we should choose the method that can help us translate “faithfully” and “smoothly”. For example:

Strike the iron while it is hot.

趁热打铁。(literal translation)

One boy is a boy, two boys half a boy, three boys no boy.

一个和尚挑水吃,两个和尚抬水吃,三个和尚没水吃。(free translation)

John was upsetting the other children, so I showed him the door.

约翰一直在扰乱别的孩子,我就把他撵了出去。(literal translation + free translation)

(3) Formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Formal equivalence focuses on the original text, aiming to convey the original information and reproduce the original form as much as possible; with this end in view, the translators attempt to be in consistent with the original wording to keep the original cultural and local characteristics. Dynamic equivalence translation is to use the closest and most natural equivalent words to convey the original information. The following example shows exactly what is dynamic equivalence.

The streets were completely deserted and everything stood in crumbling ruins.

街道上空无一人,到处都是断壁残垣。

3) Proofreading

Proofreading is a step to further verify the correct understanding of the original and polish the expression of the translation. In this stage, we need pay attention to the following points: make sure that there is no misunderstanding of the content, no omission of the key words, sentences and paragraphs, no improper translation of words or sentences, no cliché, unfamiliar vocabulary, wrongly written or mispronounced characters, no omission or mistakes in terms of names, places, dates, numbers or proper nouns, and no improper use of format, punctuations or other special symbols. For example:

We haven't seen each other since I lived in Shanghai.

Wrong: 自从我住在上海以来,彼此就一直没见过面。

Correct: 自从我离开上海以来,彼此就一直没见过面。

1.5

Translation Techniques

In translating, both grammar and rhetoric should be considered. Since Chinese and English are two different languages and present a lot of differences in their grammar, lexicon, discourse structure, etc., we need to grasp some techniques to make the translation as smooth and natural as possible. In this book the following translation techniques will be mainly discussed: diction, amplification, omission, repetition, conversion, restructuring, negation, division, etc.

1.6

Translation Appreciation

English-Chinese Translation

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business.

读书足以怡情,足以傅彩,足以长才。其怡情也,最见于独处幽居之时;其傅彩也,最见于高谈阔论之中;其长才也,最见于处世判事之际。

For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar.

练达之士虽能分别处理细事或一一判别枝节,然综观统筹,全局策划,则舍好学深思者莫属。读书费时过多易惰,文采藻饰太盛则矫,全凭条文断事乃学究故态。

They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning, by study; and studies themselves, do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience.

读书补天然之不足,经验又补读书之不足,盖天生才干犹如自然花草,读书然后知如何修剪移接,而书中所示,如不以经验范之,则又大而无当。

Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation.

有一技之长者鄙读书,无知者羡读书,唯明智之士用读书。然书并不以用处告人,用书之智不在书中,而在书外,全凭观察得之。

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.

读书时不可存心诘难读者,不可尽信书上所言,亦不可只为寻章摘句,而应推敲细思。

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them bothers; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things.

书有可浅尝者,有可吞食者,少数则须咀嚼消化。换言之,有只须读其部分者,有只须大体涉猎者,少数则须全读,读时须全神贯注、孜孜不倦。书亦可请人代读,取其所作摘要,但只限题材较次或价值不高者,否则书经提炼犹如水经蒸馏,淡而无味。

(选自 Francis Bacon 的 *Of Studies*, 王佐良译)

Chinese-English Translation

(1) 麦已经长得有好几尺高了,麦田里的桑树,也都发出了绒样的叶芽。晴天里舒叔叔的一声飞鸣过去的,是老鹰在觅食;树枝头吱吱喳喳,似在打架又像是在谈天的,大半是麻雀之类;远处的竹林丛里,既有抑扬,又带余韵,在那里歌唱的,才是深山的画眉。

Wheat was already two or three feet high and the white mulberries in the wheat field were putting forth fluffy buds. When, on a sunny day, you heard a swish overhead, it was a hawk after its prey; chirping in the branches were probably sparrows engaged in a noisy chat or a raw; the rhythmic sounds with a lingering quality were the singings of the huamei song birds—they were performing a concert in the bamboo groves in the distant hill.

渐走渐高了,山上的青红杂色,迷乱了我的眼目。日光直射在山坡上,从草木泥土里蒸发出来的一种气息,使我呼吸感到了困难;阿千也走得热起来了,把他的一件破夹袄一脱,丢向了地下。教我在一块大石上坐下息着,他一个人穿了一件小衫唱着戏去砍柴采

野果去了；我回身立在石上，向大江一看，又深深地深深地得到了一种新的惊异。

As we walked further up, my eyes were assailed and confused by the riot of mountain colors. As the sun shone direct on the hillside I had trouble in breathing from the scent rising from the plants and the earth. Ah Qian began to feel hot from walking. He took off his lined coat and threw it to the ground. He told me to rest on a big stone and then, with his small shirt on, set out for the firewood and fruits, humming some local opera aria. I stood on the stone on the hillside and, turning my eyes toward the great river, I was stunned with utter amazement.

(选自郁达夫的《我的梦，我的青春》，刘士聪译)

(2) 接读朋友的来信，尤其是远自海外犹带着异国风云的航空信，确是人生一大快事，如果无须回信的话。回信，是读信之乐的一大代价。久不回信，屡不回信，接信之乐必然就相对减少，以至于无，这时，友情便暂告中断了，直到有一天在赎罪的心情下，你毅然回起信来。蹉跎了这么久，接信之乐早变成欠信之苦，我便是这么一位累犯的罪人，交友千百，几乎每一位朋友都数得出我的前科来的。英国诗人奥登曾说，他常常搁下重要的信件不回，躲在家里看他的侦探小说。王尔德有一次对韩黎说：“我认得不少人，满怀光明的远景来到伦敦，但是几个月后就整个崩溃了，因为他们有回信的习惯。”显然王尔德认为，要过好日子，就得戒除回信的恶习。可见怕回信的人，原不止我一个。

To get letters from friends, especially airmail letters from overseas that bear the stamp of exotic climes, is unquestionably one of life's greatest pleasures, provided, that is, that they do not call for a reply. Answering letters is a heavy price to pay for the enjoyment of reading letters. The inevitable consequence of tardiness or infrequency in answering letters is a corresponding reduction in, and ultimate cessation of, the pleasure of receiving letters, in which case friendship is prematurely broken off, until the day in sackcloth and ashes you summon up the willpower to put pen to paper again. Through this dilly-dallying the pleasure of receiving letters has turned to the misery of owing letters. I am an old lag in this respect: practically every one of the friends I have made in my comings and goings can recite from my crime sheet. W. H. Auden once admitted that he was in the habit of shelving important letters, preferring instead to curl up with a detective novel; while Oscar Wilde remarked to Henley: "I have known men come to London full of bright prospects and seen them complete wrecks in a few months through a habit of answering letters." Clearly Wilde's view was that to enjoy life one should renounce the bad habit of answering letters. So I am not the only one to be faint-hearted in the regard.

回信，固然可畏，不回信，也绝非什么乐事。书架上经常叠着百多封未回之信，“债龄”或长或短，长的甚至在一年以上，那样的压力，也绝非一个普通的罪徒所能负担的。一叠未回的信，就像一群不散的阴魂，在我罪深孽重的心底幢幢作祟。理论上说来，这些信当

然是要回的。我可以坦然向天发誓,在我清醒的时刻,我绝未存心不回人信。问题出在技术上。给我一整个夏夜的空闲,我该先回一年半前的那封信呢,还是七个月前的这封?隔了这么久,恐怕连谢罪自谴的有效期也早过了吧?在朋友的心目中,你早已沦为不值得计较的妄人。“莫名其妙!”是你在江湖上一致的评语。

If it is conceded that replying to letters is to be dreaded, on the other hand not replying to letters is by no means a matter of unalloyed bliss. Normally a hundred or so letters are stacked on my bookshelf of diverse maturity of debt outstanding, the longest being over a year. That kind of pressure is more than an ordinary sinner can bear. A stack of unanswered letters battens on me like a bevy of plaintive ghosts and plays havoc with my smitten conscience. In principle the letters are there for replying to. I can swear in all honesty that I have never while of sound mind determined not to answer people's letters. The problem is a technical one. Suppose I had a whole summer night at my disposal: should I first answer the letter that was sent eighteen months ago, or that one that was sent seven months ago? After such a long delay even the expiry date for apology and self-recrimination would surely have passed? In your friends' eyes you have already stepped beyond the pale, are of no account. On the grapevine your reputation is "that impossible fellow".

(选自余光中的《尺素寸心》, David Pollard 译)

Exercises

1. Translate the following expressions into Chinese, using either literal translation or free translation.

- (1) chain reaction
- (2) at sixes and sevens
- (3) be armed to the teeth
- (4) go to one's eternal rest
- (5) Adam's apple
- (6) wet blanket
- (7) polish the apple
- (8) maintain a sustained, rapid and sound development of the national economy
- (9) preserve the style of plain living and hard struggle

2. Translate the following sentences into Chinese, using either literal translation or free translation.

- (1) I read this letter with both surprise and excitement, surprise because he is still around, excitement because he didn't ever forget me.
- (2) If my father had known of it he would have died a second time.
- (3) She would never believe anything in trousers.
- (4) Last night I heard him driving his pigs to market.
- (5) We will have to sleep on your invitation until we know whether we will be free Sunday morning.