

国外翻译研究丛书之十九

CONTEMPORARY TRANSLATION THEORIES

(Revised Second Edition)

当代翻译理论

(第二版修订本)

EDWIN GENTZLER



上海外语教育出版社

SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS

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出版说明

近年来,国内翻译研究取得了很大进展,有关翻译研究的丛书也出了多套。不过,长期以来,国内引进的原版翻译著作匮乏,不少研究都是根据二手资料;另外,学习翻译专业的研究生人数越来越多,这种状况若继续存在,将十分不利于学科的发展和翻译人才的培养。鉴于此,上海外语教育出版社约请了多名国内翻译研究著名学者分别开列出最值得引进的国外翻译研究论著的书目,并对这些书目进行整理、排序,最终确定了准备引进的正式书单。该丛书涉及的论著时间跨度大,既有经典,也有新论;内容的覆盖面也相当广泛,既有翻译本体的研究,也有跨学科的研究。这套丛书的引进将会满足翻译专业研究生教学原版参考书和翻译理论研究的需要。

上海外语教育出版社谨以此丛书献给我国的翻译学界。

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借鉴和创造 (代序)

上海外语教育出版社自成立以来一直是我国外语教育最优秀的后勤部和侦探部。因为它不但为我国各个层次(尤其本科与研究生层次)的外语教育提供了多种高水平的教材、教参和工具书,而且还出版了多学科、多语种和多系列的中文版和外文版的学术著作,比如“现代语言学丛书”、“牛津应用语言学丛书”、“美国文学史论译丛”、“外国文学史丛书”、“剑桥文学指南丛书”、“当代英语语言学丛书”以及列入国家及教育部规划的人文社科重点项目的外国语言文学、文化等方面的图书等。为了适应我国现代化建设和教育改革的需要,还出版了一批国际金融、对外贸易、涉外保险、国际经济法、国际新闻和管理科学等方面的教材与专著。这些著作在外语的学科建设与学术研究以及复合型人才培养等方面都在发挥着强有力的侦察、调研和指导作用。这是外语界有口皆碑的。

随着中外文化交流的纵深发展以及我国现代化建设对人才的需求,对比语言学和翻译学近些年来在我国有了较快的发展,最突出的证据就是①外语类硕士博士点上研究对比与翻译方向的学生在逐年迅速增多,而且我们的高校已经有了翻译学院和翻译系(当然还太少)。②外语专业的学生考中文、法律等其他人文社科专业的硕士、博士以及反方向的走向已经起步。这种跨学科的人才已成为人才资源竞争的最主要对象,因此发展趋势定会看好。上海外语教育出版社为适应这种高层次人才培养和新学科建设的需要,不但积极出版国内关于对比研究和翻译研究的专著和论文集,最近又推出了原版“国外翻译研究丛书”,这套丛书时间跨度从古代到现代,所选书目皆为译学发展史上有里程碑作用的名家

名著,堪称译学经典。他们计划分批出版,以满足读者的需求。

这套丛书的出版首先可以解决国内翻译教学原版参考书多年匮乏的困难,真可以说是我国翻译教学与理论研究的及时雨。我想学习和关心这个学科的师生和其他人士定会对这套书的引进为之欢呼,为之祝贺。

这套丛书的价值还在于能大大促进我国翻译学科建设的发展。译学学科的发展依赖于研究者在三个方面的深入研究和结合。一是对本国译学的继承性研究;二是对外国译学的借鉴性研究;三是对翻译实践和翻译教学中新问题的探索性研究。只有这三者研究深入并结合好了,才可能从经验与技巧逐步升华为具有科学性的译学理论。这三个方面的研究,改革开放以来,在我国已取得了很显著的成就,这是有目共睹的。翻译学在我国已于20世纪80年代末有了独立学科的初级形态,90年代又有了新的发展,对学科的独立性以及理论体系的结构与功能有了更多的探讨。依照学科建设的规律和研究现状,我们尚需在上述三个方面加大研究力度,而这套丛书就是借鉴性研究的主要资源。从这个角度讲,这套丛书的引进也是我国文化基本建设的重要工程之一。

在新的世纪,文化(包括各类科学技术)会多方面快速深入人类的日常生活,各国之间的交流会空前深广,因此翻译的功能会逐步扩大,实用性翻译人才的需求量定会空前增加。这就要求我们除了做好高层次研究型人才的培养以外,还应十分重视实用性人才的培养和应用译学的研究。我想出版社一定会关注和引导译学建设的理论研究与应用的发展趋势。

杨自俭

青岛海洋大学六三居室

2001年3月28日

出版前言

二十世纪下半叶以来,西方翻译理论研究盛况空前,理论派别纷繁杂陈,著述研究不一而足。许多跨学科学者,特别是诸如尼采、海德格尔、德里达、巴特等哲学家以其特有的洞察力,对这一领域倾注了巨大的热情,使得当今的翻译研究广泛进入众多研究者的视野。其多元化、跨学科的相互借鉴、交流、交锋、渗透的研究模式,一反传统的相对单一、封闭的规约习惯,不仅为本学科的发展提供了新的支撑和增长点,也赋予相关学科(特别是文化研究)一个不可或缺的新视角,逐渐完成了从翻译的“文化转向”(cultural turn)到文化研究的“翻译转向”(translation turn)的过渡。由此看来,翻译研究的勃兴并非偶然。

但是,要对这些纷呈的理论进行系统的剔抉爬梳却并不容易,这项艰苦但并不可少的课题,无论中西,鲜有令人信服的标志性成果。这一现象一直持续到根茨勒于1993年(2001年修订)出版的力作《当代翻译理论》(*Contemporary Translation Theories*)的面世才告结束。作者以其宽阔敏锐的视野,简明扼要地阐述了本学科在各方面已经或正在发生的事情,将当代西方翻译理论分为北美翻译培训派(The North American Translation Workshop)、翻译“科学”派(The “Science” of Translation)、早期翻译研究派(Early Translation Studies)、多元系统派(Polysystem Translation)和解构主义(Deconstruction)等五大流派,对从北美翻译培训派,经由七、八十年代的多元系统研究,到解构主义、文化转向、后殖民翻译理论等文学翻译研究的发展进行了一番较为全面的扫描。“勾勒出这一学科为赢得学界的尊重,建立自己独特的领域所经历的变化过程,同时,对翻译研究的未来发展方向进行了预测,热情呼吁文学、语言学、人种学、人类学和社会科学等相关学科进行更密切的合作”。(Bassnett)

作者指出,无论我们的翻译有多“好”,也永远无法吻合观众的某些“文学”期待,不论源发文化还是接受文化,这也许是个关键问题。多年来,鲜有学者能以超越传统的源语文本及翻译文本二元模式来思考翻译现象。如果说我们能从过去近十年翻译研究中学到点什么的话,那就是那些旧的理论 and 模式在解释现代翻译现象时,已不一定能派上多大用场了。近年来,翻译领域新的理论层出不穷:文化研究理论、女性主义理论、新语言理论、后殖民理论及解构理论等。作者用了较大篇幅描述了解构主义翻译理论、跨文化交际翻译理论、诗学等翻译理论。尽管由于历史的原因及作者的编选侧重,有些国家(包括中国)的理论成果无法一一包容,我们认为,作者就本书所摄取的几个方面进行的这些探索,无疑仍将有助于我们管中窥豹,了解学科前沿,摆脱基于“道”或“逻各斯”这一中西方形而上学话语催生的源语文本决定论的束缚,从而为进一步消解欧洲中心模式铺平道路。

本书旁征博引,对过去三十年来几个颇有影响的翻译理论流派进行了提纲挈领的回顾总结,就翻译理论如何对时下进行的语言哲学的探讨作出了贡献,以及对意义如何游移、接受,及言外因素如何影响跨文化交流等问题都提出了颇有见地的评价,很有参考价值。

本书不仅适合从事翻译研究的读者阅读,而且对从事文化、文学理论、人类学、心理语言学以及语言哲学等领域研究的学者亦有借鉴和启发的作用。

Series Editor's Preface

The decision to publish a new, heavily revised and updated edition of Edwin Gentzler's ground-breaking book, *Contemporary Translation Theories* is a timely one. As research in Translation Studies continues to expand, there is more need than ever for a book that sets out clearly and concisely what is happening in different strands within the discipline. Gentzler's broad-ranging perspective traces the development of literary Translation Studies from the American translation workshop programme, through the polysystems research of the 1970s and 1980s to deconstruction, the cultural turn, postcolonial translation theory and beyond.

Gentzler's skills in translation are not confined to theorizing. This book is effectively also a translation, for the author transforms a whole range of complex theoretical material into accessible language, so that anyone with no prior knowledge of the field could pick up this book and gain insights. Nor is this accidental: as Translation Studies extends its horizons, borrowing from other disciplines and in turn cross-fertilizing some of the disciplines, it is important for there always to be terminological accessibility. In this book, Gentzler takes the reader into areas of great theoretical sophistication, yet always discussing terms and concepts in ways that are enabling.

Translation Studies has grown beyond all expectations in the last twenty-five years. Gentzler maps some of the processes of the changes that the subject has undergone in its struggle to gain academic respectability and establish itself in distinctive terrain of its own. He also points to ways in which Translation Studies seems to be developing for the future, enthusiastically advocating the closer relations between related disciplines such as literary studies, linguistics, history, ethnography, anthropology and sociology. The future of Translation Studies looks bright: Gentzler's book offers a shrewd analysis of what has been achieved so far and insights into what the next phase of development is likely to show. This exciting new book will be welcomed by anyone with an interest in studying translation in the twenty-first century.

Susan Bassnett

Preface to First Edition

The formulation of this project began in the early 1980s at the International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa, where I worked on translations of poems and short stories and helped arrange panel discussions on the literary situation in various countries around the world. Because the University of Iowa houses not only outstanding English and foreign language departments, but also the famed Writers' Workshop, the IWP members were seldom at a loss for an audience. Fiction and poetry readings at local bookstores as well as the panel discussions at the school were invariably crowded. Yet while creative writers, graduate students, and faculty respectfully attended and listened to the IWP presentations, the international writers' work remained a curiosity rather than an integral part of the literary community, often referred to by students and professors alike as "minor" or "secondary" – separate and to a large degree unequal.

The reception of the foreign writers' work, in turn, did affect the nature of the International Writing Program's translation work. The desire of many international writers to be translated, published, and valued in English was enormous. While some measure of acceptability was gained in Iowa City and at certain university campuses in the United States, it was almost impossible to place translations in mainstream literary journals. The visiting writers reacted differently to such cultural disinterest. Some members, who had arrived in the United States eager to read, to talk, to exchange ideas and texts, withdrew because their work did not conform to the norms governing current literary taste in this country. Generally, these IWP participants returned to their home countries, wrote an essay about their stay in the USA, and continued with writing projects intended for native audiences, perhaps to return at a later date when conditions were more favorable. Other visiting writers recognized the problem and redirected their energies to conform to thematics and styles that might meet a more favorable reception – but at certain costs. By rewriting texts to "appeal" to Western audiences, certain themes, styles, modes of reference, and referents themselves were elided from the texts translated. Those "silences" in the text, often known only to the translator, were often not

only the most interesting in terms of creativity, but also the most revealing with regard to cultural differences.

No matter how "good" our translations were, they would never conform to certain "literary" expectations of the audience, a "problem" that may be operative regardless of the originating and receiving cultures. After all, professors, editors, and creative writers make their living from perpetuating one set of literary values over another; as "objective" or as "open" as any literary establishment tries to be, tastes are conditioned, and certain economies predominate. Though language and cultural constraints in North America seem enormous, the possibility of challenging norms and creating new forms of expression is always present. At those rare moments when cultural barriers disappear and an international writer meets with success, the "double constitution" of the act of translation becomes visible. Such a "theory" motivated the translation work at Iowa and led to my investigation of other "theories" of translation for this book.

Paul and Hualing Nieh Engle, Co-Founders and Directors of the International Writing Program, knew well the socio-political restrictions governing the context in which translations occur, and devoted their lives to breaking down such barriers. With their influence in mind, I attempt in this book to focus not just on various translation theories, but also on the "political realities" that surround the practice of literary translation, and include them in respective discussions. One of the goals of the book is to raise questions concerning the way literary translations are studied in the West and to help readers rethink conceptually how translations are defined and categorized. I thank the Engles, Peter and Mary Nazareth, Daniel Weissbort, the IWP staff, all the visiting writers, and the University of Iowa for their unswaying commitment to promoting translation and for their ongoing efforts to effect international communication.

Sincere thanks go to Hans-Joachim Schulz, Director of the Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt University, not only for allowing me to a large degree to create my own curriculum in pursuit of a fairly wide range of literary and theoretical interests, many of which form the basis for sections of the book, but also for his friendship and trust. Eugene Van Erven, a colleague in the Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt and former Director of McTyeire International House, shared my belief in the relevance of international creative writing, especially that of popular political poetry, to academic pursuits. His involvement in and support of many of my "extra-curricular" projects was invaluable. Much of the pleasure I had in the writing of this book was derived from the discussions I had with fellow students during the formative stages of each section; particular thanks go to those students in Charles Scott's seminars on continental

philosophy at Vanderbilt, especially Gene DiMagno, and to those students in Donald Davie's Pound seminar. Professors Alice Harris and František Galan, from the Linguistics Department and Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt, provided valuable comments on the manuscript. English professors Jack Prostko, Phyllis Frus, and Mark Jarman, also at Vanderbilt, not only read and responded positively to the text, but also included me in their circle of friends, making Nashville a warmer place to work.

Special thanks go to Maria Tymoczko at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst for her meticulous reading of the original manuscript and for encouragement and intellectual companionship during revisions. Conversations with the staff and participants in the 1991 CERA Summer Seminar for Translation, Communication, and Cultures at the Catholic University in Leuven, Belgium, were also very helpful during the final stage. The lectures given by Susan Bassnett, 1991 CERA Professor and this series' co-editor, proved very thought-provoking; she also gave me valuable feedback on some of the more controversial sections which follow. Series co-editor André Lefevere's unique interest in translation theory and his incisive suggestions made the entire publication process pleasurable. Publisher Janice Price supported the project from its earliest stage through to its final form.

Most importantly, Janet Gentzler Studer and Marianne Gentzler provided love and affection throughout the writing process. Megan Gentzler's love, creativity, and companionship renewed my energy during critical phases. And finally, my gratitude for Jenny Spencer's love, intellectual engagement, and unwavering confidence, extends beyond words.

Preface to the Revised Edition

As I write this preface to the second edition of *Contemporary Translation Theories*, first published in 1993, I ask myself who would have thought eight years ago that the field would have grown in such a manner? Then few scholars were thinking about translation phenomena other than in the fairly traditional source-text, translated-text binary approach. In the last few years, new theories exploded in the field of translation – cultural studies theories, feminist theories, new linguistic theories, postcolonial theories, and deconstructive theories abound. In fact, there are now so many theories that no one theorist, or one book, can possibly keep up with them all. St. Jerome Press founded a new series appropriately titled “Translation Theories Explained” to help scholars and students in the field.

Ironically, when it was first published, this book was initially criticized for including too many theories; many scholars in the field felt that this proliferation in theory was a passing phenomenon. Today, the book may appear to be theoretically limited, covering, as it does, a mere five approaches. As the field continues to grow with new scholars from different countries and different linguistic and cultural traditions conducting research, additional theories will begin to emerge, further complicating the map. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the opening of China, the emergence of the developing world, and the increased empowerment of ethnic communities within larger countries, translation activity is on the rise everywhere. Yet the cultural conditions surrounding those communities are so varied, and the economic and social situations so diverse, that the strategies for translation are correspondingly divergent. If we have learned anything in translation studies over the past eight years, it is that the old theories and models do not necessarily apply. The translator of Viking sagas has different goals and different audiences in mind from those of the translator of Latin American women poets. The Cambodian refugee groups adjusting to life in the West have different needs and priorities than the North American businessmen trying to reach buyers in the European Union. Perhaps we should not be surprised that the methods and the strategies for translation are so different.

How could we have predicted this explosion? In the late 1980s, when I

first began studying translation, the field was trying to set itself free from the dominance of the source-text oriented theories. Having traced the primary theories that gave the first heave breaking that stranglehold – i.e., the North American translation workshop, the “science” of translation, early translation studies, polysystem theory, and deconstruction – even I could not envision the explosion to follow. Indeed, when I wrote the book, many of my colleagues felt that I would never find a publisher for a book that only dealt with translation theory. Instead, the book immediately sold out, and interest has steadily grown. I am deeply gratified that developments in the field have more than borne out the ideas presented in *Contemporary Translation Theories* better than I could have possibly argued at the time.

Indeed, in rereading the book today, I feel as if it has held up rather well. Despite the huge movements in the field, *Contemporary Translation Theories* still offers a valuable historical and critical overview of the events that were primarily responsible for opening up the field. It is not that the ideas presented did not create their own sets of controversies. In fact, each chapter generated its own set of critics. Scholars who were part of the early translation studies group claimed I had mischaracterized many events in my overview in Chapter 4. When I asked them for documentation pointing out my errors, they claimed that while few published articles exist, private conversations had taken place during the early years that were important to the field’s development and upon which I had not commented. Polysystem theorists perhaps took the most issue regarding my claims of the limitations of their approach, but in general, over the years, an increasing number of scholars tend to share my dissatisfaction with the hierarchical nature of their theory and their propensity to generalize based upon little data. In fact, the least controversial chapter in terms of the book’s reception, the one on deconstruction, was the one that I had assumed would be the most controversial. Yet many scholars, especially younger ones, were clearly interested in the deconstruction’s possibilities and seemed to welcome this contribution.

In addition to creating controversies in the respective branches of the field, many scholars wrote me to say that the biggest failure of the book was that it did not include their theory – scholars from Finland felt ignored; scholars from Germany felt short-shrifted; and scholars from China felt excluded. This book, however, was never intended to provide a quantitative overview; to do so would have required a much bigger book and a much more superficial treatment of each theory covered. Translation theory is not easy; rather, it involves complex theories of meaning and complex social forces creating numerous barriers, in addition to the