

安徽省高等学校「十一五」省级规划教材

英汉互译原理

(修订版)

周方珠 卢志宏 编著

安徽大学出版社

Principles of Translation between English and Chinese

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英汉互译原理 / 周方珠, 卢志宏编著. —3 版. 合肥:
安徽大学出版社, 2008. 8

安徽省高等学校“十一五”省级规划教材

ISBN 978-7-81052-509-1

I. 英... II. ①周... ②卢... III. 英语—翻译
IV. H315.9

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2008)第 116382 号

英汉互译原理

周方珠 卢志宏 编著

出版发行 安徽大学出版社
(合肥市肥西路3号 邮编230039)

联系电话 编辑室 0551-5108498
发行部 0551-5107716

责任编辑 李梅

封面设计 孟献辉

印刷 合肥现代印务有限公司

开本 787×1092 1/16

印张 20.25

字数 470千

版次 2008年8月第3版

印次 2008年8月第1次印刷

ISBN 978-7-81052-509-1

定价 37.00 元

如有影响阅读的印装质量问题,请与出版社发行部联系调换

Preface

The 20th century witnessed an extraordinary boom in translation studies, which is marked by its interface with linguistics (including semantics, context, syntax, grammar, pragmatics, etc.), stylistics, culture, philosophy (including reading phenomenon, reception theory and hermeneutics), literature and communication theory. Before the 1970s, translation research was to a great extent treated as a branch of applied linguistics, and indeed linguistics in general was seen as the main discipline which is capable of informing the study of translation (the monograph entitled "A linguistic Theory of Translation" by Catford, J. C. published in 1965 is the typical example). Since the 1970s, translation scholars at home and abroad, especially those in the west, have begun to draw on the theoretical frameworks and methodologies borrowed from other disciplines mentioned above. In 1980s, scholars began to approach them from the perspective of culture, which marks the cultural turn in translation studies, and since then the interdisciplinary approaches to translation studies have gained sound ground. Up to the present, the growth of translation studies as a separate discipline becomes a success story.

In fact, translation has never been an activity that can be done in a vacuum. There is always a context in which translation takes place. Context varies with time and place, which determines the purpose of translation and shapes its form. In other words, translation as a means of cultural enrichment, the choice of works to be translated, the selection of strategies and methodologies, and the goals of translation activity are set by certain forces, power, or reason. There are many examples for illustration, such as translations done by Yan Fu, Lin Shu and other scholars in the late Qing Dynasty, the literary translation after the birth of the People's Republic of China, the translation of linguistic works and other works of social sciences at the turn of the century, to name but a few. Translation is therefore not the reproduction of the SL text in the target language, but rather a complex process of rewriting the original, which is influenced, or rather determined by the balance of power that exists between the SL culture and the TL culture.

In the 21st century, globalization has become one of the dominant "buzz words" in our life, especially in the areas of economy and marketing which influence all spheres of life. Economic globalization has become a trend as a result of the economic, scientific and technological development in the present-day world, which will certainly result in the cultural globalization. Needless to say, it is impossible for language to be free from the influence of the overwhelming trend of globalization. In fact, European English is emerging to fulfill the communicative needs of the EU member states. Snell-Hornby views the effect of the recent developments on the world

language English from three different perspectives. Firstly, there is the free-floating lingua franca that has largely lost track of its original cultural identity, its idioms, its hidden connotations and its grammatical subtleties, and has become a reduced standardized form of language for supra-cultural communication. Secondly, there are many individual varieties, by and large mutually intelligible, but yet each an expression of a specific cultural identity (Indian English, British English, etc.). Finally, there are the literary hybrid forms as demonstrated in postcolonial literature, forging a new language “in between”, adapted to its new surroundings. (Snell-Hornby, *M. Translation Studies*)

The new surroundings to which translation and translation studies must be adapted in the 21st century are cultural globalization. In the context of cultural globalization, translation proper that takes place between the source language and the target language is seen as the relationship between equal cultures. The increasing use of English as “lingua franca” in the global village decreases the authority of the native speaker, and the belief that English is a privileged language has been shaken as more and more people are rediscovering their cultural heritage and encouraged to present their cultural identity in translation. Against this background, the contents of this book are laid out to be adaptable to the new trend of cultural globalization, especially in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, where various strategies and methodologies are introduced to translation of different types of writings, and relative theories and principles are discussed for the feasibility of bridging the gap between Chinese and English cultures in translation of various types of literary works.

In order to demonstrate the possibility and feasibility of strategies and methods adopted in translation between Chinese and English, a large number of quotations are cited from various works. The authors of this book are grateful to all those copyright holders from whose works the quotations are cited. To those copyright holders whom the authors fail to contact with for various reasons they make sincere apology.

Zhou Fangzhu

Lu Zhihong

February 2008

内容提要

本书综合语言学、文体学、文化学和文学等相关学科的基础理论,从不同角度论证了英汉互译的基本原理及方法与策略。全书分为六章:第一章概述翻译的定义、功能、译者的必备条件及翻译标准。第二章介绍翻译策略、方法与技巧。第三章论述词语的翻译,内容包括:英汉词语的异同,语境与选词的关系,同义词的语义重叠及词汇的语体等级,成语、典故、谚语及文化负载词的翻译。第四章论述句子的翻译,内容包括:英汉句法结构的异同,形式对应的可行性,各种从句的翻译及特殊句型的转换机制。第五章从文体学的角度探讨不同文体作品的翻译,内容包括:广告翻译、新闻翻译、旅游文本翻译和科技及外交文献的翻译。第六章着力论述各类文学作品的翻译原理,作者以阐释学、接受美学及阅读理论为理据,探讨了小说、散文、诗歌、戏剧等文学作品翻译的可行性。本书融入了作者在翻译理论方面的部分研究成果。

List of abbreviations used in this book

ADJ =	adjectives
ADV =	adverbs
PREP =	prepositions
etc =	et cetera
sb =	somebody
SL =	the source language
SLT =	The source language text
sth =	something
TL =	the target language
TLT =	the target language text

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Definition

This book is designed to give a sharp focus on translation between English and Chinese. But what is translation?

Translation is an incredibly broad notion which can be understood in many different ways. For example, in the broad sense, “translation” refers to the process and result of transferring a text from the source language into the target language.

In the narrow sense, it refers to rendering a written text into another language as opposed to simultaneously interpreting spoken language.

In foreign-language instruction, translation is considered, by some, “to be a fifth skill” (next to the traditional “four skills” of speaking, listening, reading and writing). Translation is a method used to practice and test competence and performance in a second language.

Different scholars, from different perspectives, define translation differently. Catford, for example, defines translation as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)” (1965:20) as he tends to centre around the importance of maintaining some kind of equivalence between SLT and TLT. Peter Newmark, however, from the perspective of methods, classifies translation as follows:

Word-for-word translation

This is often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with the TL immediately below the SL words. The SL word-order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context. Cultural words are translated literally. The main use of word-for-word translation is either to understand the mechanics of the source language or to construe a difficult text as a pre-translation process.

Literal translation

The SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context. As a pre-translation process, this indicates the problems to be solved.

Faithful translation

A faithful translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures. It “transfers” cultural words and preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical abnormality” (deviation from SL norms) in the translation. It attempts to be completely faithful to the intentions and the text-realisation of the SL writer.

Semantic translation

Semantic translation differs from “faithful translation” only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (that is, the beautiful and natural sound) of the SL text, compromising on meaning where appropriate so that no assonance, word-play or repetition jars in the finished version. Further, it may translate, less important cultural words by culturally neutral third or functional terms but not by cultural equivalents—“une nonne repassant un corporal” may become “a nun ironing a corporal cloth”—and it may make other small concessions to the readership. The distinction between faithful and semantic translation is that the first is uncompromising and dogmatic, while the second is more flexible, admits the creative exception to 100% fidelity and allows for the translator’s intuitive empathy with the original.

Adaptation

This is the freest form of translation. It is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten. The deplorable practice of having a play or poem literally translated and then rewritten by an established dramatist or poet has produced many poor adaptations, but other adaptations have “rescued” period play.

Free translation

Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called “intralingual translation”, often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all.

Idiomatic translation

Idiomatic translation reproduces the “message” of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

Communicative translation

Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership (1988:45 –47).

Nida and Taber define translation as “translating consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, firstly in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (1969/1982: 12). Functionists define translation as that “translation is the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the demanded function to the target text (translation skopos)” (Nord 1991 a:28). *Dictionary of Translation Studies* provides readers with 82 definitions to translation. But the author believes that the translation process should be understood as a

substitution of message in one language not for separate code units but for entire messages in some other language, so translation proper can be defined as the replacement of the information of the source language by its counterpart of the target language.

1.2 Qualification

Translation, no matter what sort of translation it may be, surely serves as an intermedium between two different languages, between the peoples of two countries, just like English-Chinese translation as a medium between English and Chinese. Translation works somewhat like a matchmaker between a boy and a girl. To be a successful matchmaker one must be very familiar with both the boy and the girl. And in addition, one must learn some good methods and work flexibly. To do an adequate translation is very much like acting as a successful matchmaker. The translator must be well acquainted with both languages—the source language and the target language. Besides, one must learn the methods used in translating and the theory guiding translation. The modern theory is closely related to practical linguistics, stylistics, comparative linguistics (including bilingualism), sociolinguistics, semantics, psychology, semiotics, comparative literature and logic. Therefore, a qualified translator must be also good at linguistics, stylistics and semantics, and be a versatile scholar. Some people originally thought translation was a very easy job which could be done well as long as they learnt a foreign language. People with such point of view know not the implication of translation at all. Eugene A. Nida puts forth the following necessary qualifications which translators must have if they are to produce satisfactory translations:

1. A translator must be well acquainted with the source language.

Zhu Guangqian pointed out: We are inclined to feel too confident of our comprehension when we are reading foreign literary works. We think we know it from A to Z, yet when we start translating it we find it difficult and there are many points misunderstood by us. We are playing the fool with ourselves because of careless reading. Therefore translation serves as the best possible approach to the study of foreign languages.

2. A Translator must be well acquainted with the target language.

Let's take Yan Fu (严复) for instance:

When Yan Fu, a famous translator in the Qing Dynasty, was translating "Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays", the title turned out to be the crux that caused him to cudgel his brains day and night. His wife worried very much about it and said to him: "There is no need to sacrifice your health for a word." But Yan Fu said in reply: "Compared with the short life of a human being, a well-weighted word may enjoy eternal glory." He, then, went on to ponder over the proper representation of the title for quite some time and eventually had it translated into《天演论》which has since deserved high praise up till now. However the toiling he suffered was tasted by nobody but himself. No wonder he heaved a deep sigh when he completed his translation: "A new term established, ten days or a month spent" (一名之立,旬月踟蹰).

Only by acquainting oneself with both the source language and the target language, can one

produce a satisfactory translation. An awkward translation is caused either by the poor source language or by the poor target language. But in addition, there are still some other causes. The main cause of them is the diversities between the two languages. So far as English-Chinese translation is concerned, there are great diversities between English and Chinese which are classified into two different families—the former, Indo-European Family, the latter, Sino-Tibetan Family. Great diversities lie in history, geography, politics, economy, culture, customs and so on: these diversities cause great difficulties in translation, and sometimes it is impossible to translate.

3. A translator must be armed with professional knowledge needed.

Besides the source and target languages, one must familiarize himself with the relevant disciplines such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, geography and so on. Otherwise one would often find himself at his wit's end in translation and the translation would be an awkward one. Dr Wang Zuoliang said, "Translation is actually a miscellaneous art." Such being the case, a translator should be a versatile scholar.

4. A translator must be armed with the ability to feel empathy for the SL writer and the characters portrayed.

As an actor, one must be wise enough to be aware of the role he (or she) is going to play, and capable enough to turn the available lines into action, gesture, sound and emotion. Just like an actor, a translator must be also capable of perceiving the true intention of the original author and change his works into the target language according to the author's intention.

The famous playwright Maryann pointed out: "A translator must enter into the spirit of his character (identify himself with the role in a play)". That is to say, he seems to be

(1) present at the very spot. (身临其境)

(2) involved in the very occurrence. (亲历其事)

(3) witnessing the very parties concerned. (亲睹其人)

(4) iterating the very utterances. (亲道其法)

(5) experiencing the very joy. (亲尝其甘)

(6) and sorrow. (亲领其苦)

(7) sharing the very weal. (亲享其福)

(8) and woe. (亲受其祸)

(9) partaking of the glee. (亲得其乐)

(10) and grief. (亲感其悲)

5. A translator must be armed with the excellent ability of expressiveness and imagination.

But how? Read and try to recite selections of ancient Chinese and English classics, and the poetry by the famous poets. "Toil yourself and endure hardship for obtaining a well-chosen word" and just as the famous poet Du Fu did, "never give up until an amazing poetic masterpiece is gained".

Apart from the above-mentioned qualifications, experience plays an important part in a good translation. Let's now analyse the following original and its translation.

When the literary gentleman, whose flat old Ma Parker cleaned every Tuesday, opened the door to her that morning, he asked after her grandson. Ma Parker stood on the doormat inside the

dark little hall, and she stretched out her hand to help her gentleman shut the door before she replied, "We buried'im yesterday, sir," she said quietly.

巴克妈妈是替一个独身文学家收拾屋子的。一天早上那文学家替她开门的时候,他问起巴克妈妈的小外孙,巴克妈妈站在那间暗暗的小外房的门帘上,伸出手去帮他关门再答话,“我们昨天把他埋了,先生”,她静静地说。

"Oh, dear me! I'm sorry to hear that," said the literary gentleman in a shocked tone. He was in the middle of his breakfast. He wore a very shabby dressing-gown and carried a crumpled newspaper in one hand. But he felt awkward. He could hardly go back to the warm sitting-room without saying something more. Then because these people set such store by funerals he said kindly, "I hope the funeral went off all right."

"Beg pardon, sir?" said old Ma Parker huskily. Poor old bird! She did look dashed.

“啊,啊!我听着难过。”那文学家惊讶地说。他正在吃他的早饭。他穿着一件破烂的便袍,一张破烂的报纸,拿在一只手里。但是他觉得不好意思。要不再说一两句话,他不好意思走回他的暖和的“起坐间”去——总得再有一两句话。他想起了他们一班人下葬是看得很重的。他就和善地说,“我料想下葬办得好好儿的。”

“怎么说呢,先生?”老巴克妈妈嘎着嗓子说。

可怜的婆子!她看得怪寒伧的。

The original clearly tells us that "Old Ma Parker cleaned every Tuesday" for the literary gentleman. But the translator failed to put it into Chinese, and what is more, "我听着难过", "婆子", "怪寒伧的" are far from being proper; "他正在吃他的早饭", "一张破烂的报纸,拿在一只手里", are far from being standard Chinese.

These are obvious mistakes, as for the syntax, choice of words and even the comprehension of the original, there is much to be desired. Nobody could believe that it was translated by Xu Zhimo, a famous poet and prose writer, who had once studied English in Columbia University in U. S. and Cambridge University in Britain. As Xu was good at both Chinese and English, the only explanation of his failure to translate the foregoing passage into good Chinese is his lack of "experience" which plays a considerably important part in translation. One might be armed with a good command of a foreign language and very capable of expressing himself in his mother tongue as well, but not necessarily a qualified translator. That's why we focus our effort on practice of translation.

In addition to all these qualifications mentioned above, we have to bear in mind one more point—"keep objectivity of the original and shun subjectivity" (保持原文的客观性而避免主观性). This is a very important point to us. Because translators sometimes, out of the causes of politics, social system or religious belief, make some changes of the original text purposely or accidentally. But as a truly qualified translator, one should in no circumstances modify, let alone change, the will and attitude of the author of the original text.

1.3 Criteria of Translation

The subject of criteria of translation belongs to the practical theory of translation which is aimed to answer three fundamental questions:

- (1) What is the nature of translation as linking together content and form? (This question has been discussed already.)
- (2) What are the criteria for adequate and acceptable translations? (This is the very question we are going to take up in this chapter.)
- (3) What are the problems which a translator ought to be able to recognize and resolve in order to produce a satisfactory translation? (This question will be dealt with in the following chapters.)

Early in the Tang Dynasty in our country, the learned monk Xuan Zang(玄奘) designed the criteria of translation with emphasis placed on accuracy and general knowledge. In the Qing Dynasty, Yan Fu established a three-character standard for translation:

“信”(faithfulness)

“达”(expressiveness)

“雅”(elegance)

which are similar to “tri-ness” by Herbert Rotheinstein(赫伯特·罗森斯坦): faithfulness, expressiveness and gracefulness which were considered the golden rule in the field of translation.

After the May 4th Movement, Lu Xun(鲁迅) proposed:

“信”(faithfulness) and “顺”(smoothness) as the criteria of translation.

After the birth of new China, quite a lot of translators put forward various criteria; such as “忠实”, “通顺”, “准确”, “流畅”, 重“神韵”, 而不是“形貌”(沈雁冰), “神似”与“形似”(许渊冲), “入化”(钱钟书) and so on. Among these criteria, however, Yan Fu’s standard “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance” is a highly influential theory which has given rise to a heated discussion. Quite some translators prefer Yan Fu’s theory to others. Some disagree with it. Still some people make diverse interpretations of Yan Fu’s three-character criterion of translation as:

“信”——Being faithful to the original(忠实于原文)

“达”——Being explicit and smooth(明白晓畅)

“雅”——Being elegant in words(词语的优雅)

which is different from Yan’s own definition:

“信”——达旨(将原文说明)

“达”——前后引衬,以显其意

“雅”——尔雅(用汉以前字法,句法)

Translations done by Yan Fu and Lin Shu were based on this three-character criterion. Here is an example taken from his translation 《天演论》“Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays”(by Henry Huxley).

It may be safely assumed that, two thousand years ago, before Caesar set foot in Southern