

Foreign Language
Teaching and Research

外语教学

姜亚军 殷耀 主编

与研究论丛

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前 言

《外语教学与研究论丛》经过一年多的精心策划和编辑,现由复旦大学出版社正式出版了。这本论文集是东华大学外语学院学科建设史上的一件大事,是对外语学院科研力量的一次检阅,同时也对外语学院强化科研氛围、提高教师科研意识、促进科研和教学相长产生积极推进作用,势必对外语学院从教学型学院向教学研究型学院的转变产生深远的影响。

编辑出版这本论文集的初衷有三。第一,提倡语言和教学研究在教学中的重要作用。我国高等教育的目的在于培养具有创新意识的人才。就这一点而言,没有创新意识和科研能力的教师就很难说是合格的教师。教学是一个动态的过程,一方面涉及教与学双方的参与,另一方面又关乎大纲、教材、课堂教学过程和评价体系的不断更新。这就要求一名合格的教师能够从教学理论的高度把握整个教学过程,从学习者的心理、学习习惯以及语言和文化差异到大纲设计、教材选用、课堂教学、评价体系等方面都能够创造性地工作,才能因材施教,因人施教,进而达到预期的教学目的。同时,即使在本科教学方面,教学中能力的培养远远比知识的传输重要。就大学英语教学而言,一个学期一本教材的教学方法,四年通过“四级”或者“六级”的教学目的,显然已经不能满足现代社会对本科毕业生的要求。英语专业和日语专业教学也不再可以把能讲一口流利的英语或日语,或者把掌握多少多少词汇量作为教学目标。即使把“实用性”人才作为目的之一,“流利的傻瓜”也很难适应日后的工作需要。在以往的教学中,教师往往一点一滴地传输“知识”,“能力”的问题则留给了学生自己。如果我们需要自己的学生在未来的工作中具有创造意识和适应能力,那就首先要求我们的教师在教学中具有这种意识和能力。

第二,在论文的审稿和编辑过程中,外语学院学术委员会成员认真阅读了每篇论文初稿,并提出了较为详尽的修改意见,目的是要每位投稿者了解学术研究的基本方法:即首先要进入一个“学术社区”(scientific community)。科学研究中存在不同的“圈子”;每一个“圈子”的成员决定在该领域什么课题重要,研究该课题需要采用什么方法,研究成果该如何写作,写作应该采用何种规范等问题。用科学哲学家 Thomas Khun 的话说,每一个“学术社区”都在某一个特定的时期存在一个“范式”(paradigm)。一般而言,遵循这个“范式”者就可以被接受,而“另起炉灶”者则往往会被这个“社区”排除在外。当然,经过一段时间,每一个领域都会发生“革命”,即老的“范式”被否定或者被修订。“革命”发生

了,“重要”的研究课题和研究方法也就变了。

因此,特别是对初涉研究领域的教师而言,我们编辑论文的目的之一是引导其进入一个自己感兴趣的“学术社区”,熟悉该“社区”的历史和现状,进而决定自己能够为该“社区”做些什么。这就是为什么我们这次特别强调“文献回顾”(literature review)、引用和写作规范的重要性的原因。由于国内在这几个方面的现状还不尽如人意,大概有人觉得我们的做法有点舍本逐末或者故弄玄虚。想想“入乡随俗”的重要性,道理也就不言而喻了。

第三,我们出版论文集的另一个目的,在于让我们的教师能够“走出外语学院”。因此,这本论文集可以讲是一个 training wheel,年轻教师具备了一定的科研意识,进入自己该进入的“社区”,熟悉了“社区”的运作方式,也就有能力“走出去”了。当然,我们也高兴地看到,这次收编的论文,几经修改,有不少已经完全具备“走出去”的水平了。

在该论文集的编辑过程中,外语学院广大教师积极参与和配合。绝大部分教师都能够按时交稿并按照修改意见认真修改。有些教师更是几“易”其稿,精神令我们感动。这种精神让我们看到了外语学院教学和科研水平提高的希望,看到外语学院的年轻教师的前途,也看到了外语学院学科建设的未来。

在这里,我们首先要感谢外语学院学术委员会的几位委员,他们在暑期牺牲休息时间认真阅读每一份稿件,并提出中肯的修改意见。在论文的遴选过程中,几度召开学术委员会,对每一篇稿件热烈讨论,认真定夺。没有他们的辛勤工作,我们的论文集不可能具有目前的质量和面貌。

当然,令我们感动的还有,作为我院的兼职教授和顾问教授,张辉、郭焰烈和野元菊雄先生也惠赐大作,为我们增添力量。

在论文集最后校订期间,任再新和马素萍同志也做了大量校对工作。另外,外语学院研究生朱颖、王妮娜和张娟同学也在规范的修订中做出一定的工作,我们一并感谢。

最后,我们要感谢复旦大学出版社的栾奇老师。在论文的编辑和审稿过程中栾老师给我们提出了诸多建设性的意见和建议,为这本论文集增色不少,其严谨的学术精神和一丝不苟的态度给我们留下了很深的印象。

编者

2006年12月17日

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Translated English: Universals and Particulars

Donghua University JIANG Yajun

Abstract: Translationese has by and large been talked about either in terms of recommended “foreignization” or in terms of negative evaluation. Recent works from the translation studies have found that it is a “sub-code”, arising out of the bilateral consideration of the matrix and target codes. This paper presents itself as an effort to prove that translated English is a distinct variety of English. This is done by drawing upon findings from corpus-based translation studies to show some of the important “universals of translation”, and then insights from Contrastive Rhetoric and cultural studies on translation are exploited to reveal the culture- and language-related differences in translated English texts. The combination of these aspects result in what is called “translated English”. The results are expected to contribute to the current research into the global spread of English.

Key Words: translated English translation universals particulars

1. Introduction

This paper investigates the notion of “translated English”, in contrast to “non-translated English”. Its focal point is that translated English texts differ from comparable non-translated texts in English, the target language (TL), in the sense that they have specific properties that cannot be found in the latter. Translated English, therefore, makes a distinct variety of English. What makes it distinct is that, on the one hand, translated English texts, regardless of the source language (SL), have been found to share significant lexical, syntactic, and textual features and, on the other hand, they are inevitably SL-specific, exhibiting unique characteristics due to, among other factors, the source language and the translation tradition involved.

In this paper, I will first draw upon findings from recent corpus-based translation studies to show some of the important “universals of translation”, “linguistic features which typically occur in translated rather than original texts and thought to be independent of the influence of the specific language pairs involved in the process of translation,” (Laviosa-Braithwaite, 1998, p. 288) and then insights from Contrastive Rhetoric and cultural studies on translation will be exploited to reveal the culture- and language-related differences in translated English texts. The combination of these aspects result in what I call “translated English”.

2. Language of Translation

It is common, when reading translations, to feel that they have their own peculiar style. This makes translation scholars speak of the language of translation as a separate sub-language within a language, which they call “the third code” (Frawley, 1984), “the third language” (Duff, 1981), or translationese (Gellerstam, 1986). Frawley (1984, pp. 168-169) has the following to say about “the third code”:

The translation itself [...] is essentially a third code which arises out of the bilateral consideration of the matrix and target codes; it is, in a sense, a subcode of each of the codes involved. That is, since the translator truly has a dual lineage it emerges as a code in its own right, setting its own standards and structural presuppositions and entailments [...].

Although scholars such as Frawley (1984) and Sager (1984) saw the need to examine translations as a register and to unveil their unique features, until recently this “subcode” has by and large been talked about either in terms of recommended “foreignization” or in terms of negative evaluation. For example, it occurs when an “unusual distribution of features is clearly a result of the translator’s inexperience or lack of competence in the target language” (Baker, 1993, p. 248). Jiang (2002) also shows that how the debate over “foreignization” vs. “nativization” has continued for years to be one of the lasting themes in Chinese translation circle.

However, the past decade has witnessed more and more researchers switching to a more descriptive, non-evaluative point of view, a stand which considers the language of translation as a unique register resulting from the confrontation of the source and the target codes, “a kind of compromise between the norms or patterns of the source language and those of the target language” (Baker, 2000, p. 21). This has led translation scholars such as Øverås (1998) to a long journey “in search of the third code.”

What is exciting about the journey is that traditional comparisons between one source text and its translation have given way to comparisons between large bodies of translated text with large bodies of original text in the same language, both retrieved from monolingual comparable corpora, which include original (non-translated) texts in a given language and translations into the same language. These corpora are now believed to a “fruitful resource for the systematic study of the product and the process of translation” (Laviosa, 2003, p. 267): large amounts of material make it possible to decide whether or not the characteristic phenomena of translations suggested in earlier studies really exist by comparing translated texts with non-translated texts and, more importantly, conclusions based on large corpora are more reliable than those based on small samples and intuitions. As a result, different corpora have been built and explored to compute distributional statistics about the selected lexical, collocational, syntactic, and discursal features expected to be relevant to the translated/original distinction (Scott, 1996; Al-Shabab, 1996; Laviosa,

1998a, 1998b; Munday, 1998; Øverås, 1998; Maia, 1998; Johansson, 1997), translator training (Zanettin, 1998), professional translating (Zanettin, 1998; Laviosa, 2003), and human perception of translationese (Tirkkonen-Condit, 2002).

A much exploited corpus is the Translational English Corpus (TEC), a corpus of translated English held at the Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies at the University of Manchester. It was designed specifically for the purpose of studying translated texts to unveil the way in which the patterning of translated text might be different from that of non-translated text in the same language, and stylistic variation across individual translators. The 10-million-word corpus currently consists of four text types: fiction, in-flight magazines, biography, and newspaper articles. The translations were published from 1983 onwards and were produced by translators, male and female, with English as their native language or language of habitual use. Other similar corpora include the English Norwegian Parallel Corpus (ENPC), compiled by the Department of English and American Studies at the University of Oslo, and several corpora hosted at the Centre for Translation Studies, the University of Leeds. These corpora are being expanded from time to time to involve more materials and different registers. It has to be noted that texts from these corpora are usually investigated against comparable texts retrieved from the British National Corpus (BNC).

Although there are both theoretical and practical problems, even "potential dangers", in building and using translational corpora (Laviosa, 1998a, p. 6), various studies have confirmed the hypothesis that the language of translation is a distinct variety of language, being different from both the SL and the TL. Johansson (1998), for example, finds a good example of differences in lexical distribution between translated and original texts in the English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus: While the English verbs (*love and hate*) are about three times as common as their Norwegian counterparts in the original texts, the frequencies for the English verbs go down and the figures for Norwegian verbs go up in the translated texts.

Sanz (2003) is also interested in word frequencies, but she compares connectors (conjunctions and discourse markers) in thematic position in three different corpora of tourist literature: one written in Spanish, one written in English, and a translated English corpus from the Spanish texts in the first corpus. The results show that

the texts translated into English do not strictly follow the generic patterns of English or Spanish with respect to the use of connectors in thematic position in tourist literature [...] The generic patterns developed in the English texts translated from Spanish are the result of the negotiation between a general tendency in translation towards the suppression of connectors and a tendency towards adequacy to the SL norms, which, in this case, means a tendency, in the opposite direction, towards the explicitation of connectors. (Sanz, 2003, p. 304)

Based on a sub-corpus of the narrative prose from the monolingual, multi-source-language English Comparable Corpus (ECC), a one-million-word sample of the TEC, and 18 comparable

texts from the BNC, Laviosa (1998c, p. 8) has found what she calls “core patterns of lexical use” in translated versus original texts:

- i) Translated texts have a relatively lower percentage of content words versus grammatical words (i. e. , their lexical density is lower);
- ii) The proportion of high frequency words versus low frequency words is relatively higher in translated texts;
- iii) The list head of a corpus of translated texts accounts for a larger area of the corpus (i. e. , the most frequent words are repeated more often);
- iv) The list head of translated texts contains fewer lemmas.

Even the occurrence of contracted forms (such as *it's*, *we're*, and *don't*) in translated texts are found to be different from non-translated texts in terms of both variety and frequency. For example, Olohan (2003) has discovered that the rate of contraction of *not* with *do* and its variants (*does* and *did*) in the BNC is 74% in fiction. This is very close to Biber et al's (1999). Founding of 75%. In the TEC, however, it is only 58% , thus considerably lower. This tendency is found to be true of other contracted forms. Olohan, therefore, came to the conclusion that “there was a greater propensity for TEC texts to use long forms than contractions and for BNC texts to use contractions rather than long forms” (2003, p. 84). Since contractions are strongly associated with the spoken language (Biber et al. , 1999), taking into account other co-occurring features such as *that*-deletion (see below), Olohan (2003, p. 86) suggests that

it would appear that the BNC writing is more involved, more generalised, less explicit, less edited than the writing in TEC; the fiction writer's purpose is more involved, the translator's less so [...] it could be hypothesised that there is a higher incidence of the “informational” features in TEC than would be expected for fictional writing.

Since the vast majority of studies involve translated English texts of certain register, rather than language pairs excluding English, the characteristic phenomena uncovered probably feature what I call “international translated English.” Actually, Baker (1996) is said to have developed some “hypotheses on the universal features of *English translations*” (Hansen-Schirra, 2003, p. 288, italics added), which, as will be seen, have been verified by evidence from English translations from a number of languages including German, Finnish, Spanish, Norwegian, Italian, Chinese, Catalan, French, and Brazilian Portuguese. At the same time, in a study of the translated and the original newspaper texts from *The Guardian* and *The Europe*, Laviosa (1998c) discovered tendencies similar to what she found in the ECC narrative texts (Laviosa, 1998b). Because those features occur in two different text types, Laviosa suggests that “they may prove typical of *English translated text in general*” (1998c, p. 8, italic added).

3. Universal Features of Translated English

Although the corpus-based investigations of universals in translated text are mainly limited to

Romance languages and the degree of comparability between translated and original texts is still open to discussion (Laviosa, 1997), the following global patterns of translated English have been increasingly shown to be beyond debate by studies in various linguistic and cultural contexts:

3.1 Explicitation

This means that translators tend to render explicit in their translations implicit information in the source language text. That is to say, the translated text tends to contain fewer ambiguous items than the original. Evidence of explicitation has been found in terms of sentence and text length, explanatory vocabulary, optional words and subordinators. Øverås (1998), for example, compared distribution of explicating and implicating shifts in two sub-corpora consisting of English and Norwegian translations of fiction from the bi-directional ENPC. The results show that there is a general tendency of explicitation in both translated English and translated Norwegian texts.

The TEC has also been exploited for the same purpose. Olohan and Baker's (2000) empirical analysis, for example, indicated a substantially heavier use of the reporting *that* with verbs *say* and *tell* in the TEC than in a BNC sub-corpus. Olohan (2001) pursued the same line of research further, focusing on a less common verb, *promise*, which can also take an optional *that*, and found the same pattern between translated English and non-translated. In another study, Olohan (2002) has found significant differences in the two corpora concerning optional preposition *to* after verb *help* and optional *in order* before *to*: the complementiser *to* is used in 37.5% of the TEC instances, compared with only 26% of the BNC occurrences; and the search of *in order to* returned 250 instances in the BNC, but 1,225 in the TEC.

It has to be noted here that researchers has also attempted to see whether the tendency to keep the optionals is the result of conscious or unconscious process. In an investigation of translation explicitation in the imaginary domain, for example, Olohan (2001) has shown that that translated English in the TEC displays a higher incidence of a range of optional syntactic features than is observed in a comparable sub-corpus of BNC and, more importantly, that

this tendency not to omit optional syntactic elements may be considered subliminal or subconscious rather than a result of deliberate decision-making of which the translator is aware — most translators do not have a conscious strategy for dealing with optional —, for example. It can be argued that it is the nature of the process of translation and the cognitive processing which it requires which produces the kind of patterning seen here. (2001, p.429)

3.2 Simplification

This refers to the tendency of translators to simplify texts — consciously or unconsciously — in order to improve the readability of their translations. Simplification, more often than not, goes hand in hand with explicitation. Linguistic features indicating explicitation (e. g. , sentence length and the ratio of lexical vs. grammatical words) may, at the same time, make the texts easier to comprehend. The mean sentence length of translated texts tends to be lower, as translators

are found to break up long, complex sentences into more, shorter sentences in their translations (Hansen-Schirra, 2003). As have seen above, the lexical density, the ratio of lexical versus grammatical words, in translated English texts is lower than in original English texts, and the ratio of high frequency words versus low frequency words is relatively higher (Laviosa, 1998c). This means that translations contain more function words, fewer lexical words and more commonly used words than originals and are thus easier to read.

Vocabulary richness or variety is also believed to be a good indicator of simplification in translated English. Al-Shabab (1996), for example, investigated the type-token ratio, the ratio of “types” (the number of lemmata) to “tokens” (the total number of words), in three corpora of radio news broadcasts in English. The texts include English broadcasts based on Arabic originals for Damascus English Service; original English broadcasts for BBC Radio Four (for native speakers); and original English broadcasts from the BBC World Service (for nonnative speakers). The results revealed that the translational group had a lower type-token ratio than the two original target-language corpora. Furthermore, Al-Shabab found that there were fewer cases of *hapax legomena*, a type occurring just once in the entire text, and greater repetition of frequent words. Al-Shabab argued that these three characteristics were related aspects of simplification in the language of translation.

3.3 Normalization

Normalization means that translations have a tendency to conform to, or even to exaggerate, the typical features of the target language. As a test for normalization, Scott (1996) analyzed the Portuguese novel *A Hora da Estrela*, by Clarice Lispector, and its English translation *The Hour of the Star*, to see, in particular, how the negative word *nao*, which is dispersed throughout the original, is rendered in the English translation. The result showed that that the word *nao* had been translated into 72 different English words and, more importantly, it had been omitted 50 times. By grouping the translator's choices, Scott found two poles of normalization: that resulting from the systemic constraints of the target language and that from the translator's own preferences. Consequently, Scott concluded that, as cited in Laviosa (2003, p. 271), “the nothingness conjured up in the source text has been weakened and dispersed.”

Another linguistic feature which represents normalization is the tendency to normalize marked and ungrammatical structures. This is often found to occur in interpreting, where “interpreters tend to finish unfinished sentences and to grammaticalize ungrammatical structures” (Hansen-Schirra, 2003, p. 289).

A further method to test this universal feature of translation is to see how punctuations are used in translations, since translators are believed to use punctuations less creatively (Baker, 1996). For example, they often use a stronger mark to render a weaker one in the original: semicolons or periods for commas and periods for semicolons. This can also be considered an attempt to simplify the text.

3.4 Leveling out

Compared to a corpus of texts originally produced in the target language, texts in a comparable corpus of translated texts are more similar to each other in terms of lexical density, type-to-token ratio and average sentence length. This means that translators tend to use common-core linguistic features, preventing their translations from going extreme (Baker, 1996).

To sum up, features like the above contribute to the commonality of translated English. With the expansion of translational corpora and the software for processing them, translation researchers will undoubtedly have a better understanding about both macro- and micro-structural and stylistic features that occur exclusively or with unusually high or low frequency in translated English texts as opposed to original ones and that cannot be traced back to the influence of any particular SL. While this is a promising field of study for both translation and world Englishes scholars, SL influence upon translated texts can never be ignored and it, as a matter of fact, is an important factor that makes translated English different from non-translated English. What is even more significant is that it is also one of the major factors that make translated English from various source languages different from one another.

4. SL-Specific Features of Translated English

Translated English from different source languages are necessarily different from one another and from comparable non-translated English. In other words, translated English from Chinese is more or less Chinglish and that from Japanese Japlish. This is mainly due to, among other factors, the source language, especially the way information flows in the SL text, and the translation tradition involved.

4.1 The source language

The source language is always making itself felt in the translated English. First of all, translators seldom, if not never, change the way information is arranged in the SL text; the sentence order in a paragraph and the paragraph order in the text. Nor do they remove parts of a text that may be considered unnecessary by TL readers. This is obvious when one considers what is called “unit of translation”, “the stretch of source text on which the translator focuses attention in order to represent it as a whole in the target language” (Malmkjær, 1998, p. 286). To see what unit is used in the translation process, scholars often employ the so-called “think-aloud protocol.” It has been found that, while translation learners tend to focus on the single word, more experienced translators often isolate and translate units of meaning, usually realized in phrases, clauses, or sentences. Although there are exceptions, “[i]n general, then, the clause tends to be selected as the unit of translation to aim for” (Malmkjær, 2001, p. 287). Using the method of videotaping, Séguinot (1999, p. 91) has shown that the sentence is the typical unit in translation:

they [professional translators] read and comprehend a typographical sentence be-